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THE SACRAMENTS

IN

THE NEW TESTAMENT

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THE SACRAMENTS

IN

THE NEW TESTAMENT

BEING THE KERR LECTURES FOR 1903

BY

REV. JOHN C. LAMBERT, B.D.

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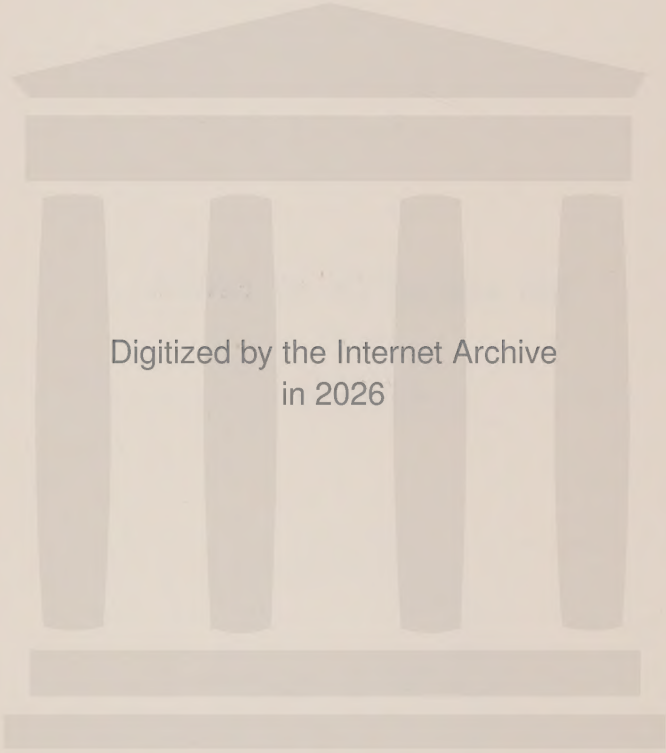
TO

THE MEMORY OF MY FATHER

AND TO

MY WIFE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THE KERR LECTURESHIP.

THE "KERR LECTURESHIP" was founded by the TRUSTEES of the late Miss JOAN KERR of Sanquhar, under her Deed of Settlement, and formally adopted by the United Presbyterian Synod in May 1886. In the following year, May 1887, the provisions and conditions of the Lectureship, as finally adjusted, were adopted by the Synod, and embodied in a Memorandum, printed in the Appendix to the Synod Minutes, p. 489.

On the union of the United Presbyterian Church with the Free Church of Scotland in October 1900, the necessary changes were made in the designation of the object of the Lectureship and the persons eligible for appointment to it, so as to suit the altered circumstances. And at the General Assembly of 1901 it was agreed that the Lectureship should in future be connected with the Glasgow College of the United Free Church. From the Memorandum, as thus amended, the following excerpts are here given :—

II. The amount to be invested shall be £3000.

III. The object of the Lectureship is the promotion of the study of Scientific Theology in the United Free Church of Scotland.

The Lectures shall be upon some such subjects as the following, viz.:—

A. Historic Theology—

(1) Biblical Theology, (2) History of Doctrine, (3) Patristics, with special reference to the significance and authority of the first three centuries.

B. Systematic Theology—

(1) Christian Doctrine—(*a*) Philosophy of Religion, (*b*) Comparative Theology, (*c*) Anthropology, (*d*) Christology, (*e*) Soteriology, (*f*) Eschatology.

(2) Christian Ethics—(*a*) Doctrine of Sin, (*b*) Individual and Social Ethics, (*c*) The Sacraments, (*d*) The Place of Art in Religious Life and Worship.

Further, the Committee of Selection shall from time to time, as they think fit, appoint as the subject of the Lectures any important Phases of Modern Religious Thought or Scientific Theories in their bearing upon Evangelical Theology. The Committee may also appoint a subject connected with the practical work of the Ministry as subject of Lecture, but in no case shall this be admissible more than once in every five appointments.

IV. The appointments to this Lectureship shall be made in the first instance from among the Licentiates or Ministers of the United Free Church of Scotland,

of whom no one shall be eligible who, when the appointment falls to be made, shall have been licensed for more than twenty-five years, and who is not a graduate of a British University, preferential regard being had to those who have for some time been connected with a Continental University.

V. Appointments to this Lectureship not subject to the conditions in Section IV. may also from time to time, at the discretion of the Committee, be made from among eminent members of the Ministry of any of the Nonconformist Churches of Great Britain and Ireland, America, and the Colonies, or of the Protestant Evangelical Churches of the Continent.

VI. The Lecturer shall hold the appointment for three years.

VII. The number of Lectures to be delivered shall be left to the discretion of the Lecturer, except thus far, that in no case shall there be more than twelve or less than eight.

VIII. The Lectures shall be published at the Lecturer's own expense within one year after their delivery.

IX. The Lectures shall be delivered to the students of the Glasgow College of the United Free Church of Scotland.

XII. The Public shall be admitted to the Lectures.

PREFACE.

THE following course of Lectures was delivered to the students of the Glasgow College of the United Free Church of Scotland in January and February of this year. As being originally a United Presbyterian Foundation, the Kerr Lectureship was previously attached to the United Presbyterian College in Edinburgh; but on the happy Union of 1900 it was transferred to the Glasgow College of the United Church, and the present course is thus the first that has been delivered under the new auspices and arrangements.

Owing to the limitations of time, only eight Lectures were actually read; but, as printed now, the book is divided into ten Lectures, which is in accordance with the original plan.

It is right that I should record here my obligations and sincere thanks to my brother-in-law, the Rev. John K. Fairlie, Fenwick, for the great service he rendered me in delivering the whole course of Lectures on my behalf—loss of voice having made it impossible for me to discharge this part of my duty personally.

JOHN C. LAMBERT.

FENWICK, *March* 1903.

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THE SACRAMENTS.

LECTURE I.

Scope and Sources of the Inquiry.

I HAVE chosen as the theme of the present course of lectures, "The Sacraments in the New Testament." It is a subject the permanent importance of which will be admitted by every one who thinks of the place which the sacraments have held from the beginning in the life of the universal Church; the place which, with very varying interpretations of their meaning, they still continue to hold. But there are movements and tendencies around us at the present time which appear to make the subject one of very special moment and even urgency. From two opposite directions the question of the sacraments is forced in these days upon the attention of Christian students. On the one hand, we have a powerful and aggressive ritualistic movement, characterised by what can only be described from the Protestant point of view as an exaggerated valuation of sacramental ordinances. In England this movement has led to what is commonly described as a crisis in the Anglican Church; and even in Scotland, here and there, it has made its pulsations felt. And this flowing tide of ritualism is a fact which not merely affects the Churches immediately concerned with it, but vitally

affects the relations of the Christian Churches to one another; insomuch that it is evident that until the doctrine of the sacraments is brought to a better settlement than at present obtains, it is hopeless to dream of any realisation of that ideal of Christian unity which in the divine Providence is working so strongly upon the mind of the modern Church. For, apart from the question of relation to the State, which is after all a matter of external policy rather than one on which the essential life of the Church can be said to depend,[1] and apart from views as to the superiority of this or that particular form of Church government, it is, at bottom, opinions which are entertained with regard to the sacraments that present the main obstacle to union, and even to brotherly co-operation between the Churches. It is the High Church theory of the sacraments which necessarily turns the ministry into a separate priesthood; and it is the doctrine of a specific ministering priesthood, again, which forms the logical basis of that cognate theory of orders and apostolical succession which constrains High Churchmen, deliberately, though often regretfully, to unchurch all Christians who do not stand in what they regard as the fixed line of the divine transmission of grace.[2] Hence the importance of having clear and correct views as to sacraments is urged upon us not only by the constant duty of seeking to arrive at the truth in this as in all other matters of Christian belief, but by serious practical questions of the day, and by those dreams and aspirations regarding the unity of Christ's Church on earth which are cherished more and more eagerly, and on

[1] Cf. Principal Marshall Lang's *The Church and its Social Mission* (The "Baird Lecture" for 1901), p. 113.

[2] See Principal Rainy, *Ancient Catholic Church*, p. 514; and cf. Bishop Gore's argument that the necessity for the apostolic succession rests upon the fact that the ministry is "a stewardship of divine mysteries" (*The Church and the Ministry*, p. 70 ff.).

very different quarters of the field, by multitudes of Christian men.[1]

But if, on the one hand, this ritualistic overestimation of the sacraments, as I have ventured by anticipation to call it, challenges us to a serious consideration of the subject, we are quite as insistently summoned to the same task by a very decided tendency towards their underestimation, if not their complete depreciation, which has sprung up within recent years in the field of critical scholarship. There are many New Testament critics who assure us that baptism and the Lord's Supper must now be placed on an altogether lower platform from that which has hitherto been accorded them in all the organised Christian Churches. Not only must they be interpreted in ways which largely deprive them of any special significance as means of grace, but they must be stripped of their institutional authority as ordinances that have come to us from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Now the latter certainly is the footing on which they have hitherto stood in the view of the universal Church, with exceptions too minor to be dwelt upon.[2] However the various sections of Christianity may have differed as to the meaning and value of these two rites, it has been taken for granted on all hands that both of them were appointed by Jesus Himself before His departure from the world, and that it was His desire and purpose that they should be observed by His people "all the days, even unto the consummation of the age." But modern critical scholarship no longer suffers us to take this for granted. On the contrary, it frequently assumes, as if it were a matter hardly worth

[1] Recent Roman and Anglican literature is full of this spirit, while its practical influence has been written broadly upon the history of Scottish Presbyterianism during the latter half of the nineteenth century. For illustrations of the growth of the constructive conception of the Church among modern Congregationalists, see Mr. D. Macfadyen's *Constructive Congregational Ideals*, *passim*.

[2] The principal exception is presented by the Society of Friends.

debating, that the baptismal commission at the end of Matthew's Gospel was not spoken by Jesus, but was inserted into the tradition at a later time; and that thus we have no sufficient ground for believing that Jesus ever instructed His disciples to go and teach all nations, baptizing them. And as for the Lord's Supper, while the critical assault at this point is by no means so vigorous as in the case of baptism, there is at all events a formidable body of opinion, especially in Germany, which maintains that a careful comparison of the various accounts of what took place at the Last Supper of Jesus forbids us to conclude that the Lord gave any instructions that this parting meal should be repeated, or even Himself anticipated that this would be done.

In the course of the following lectures, these critical attacks upon the authority of the sacraments will have to be discussed in detail, as regards both baptism and the Lord's Supper. But I refer to them now, because they bring before us one of the special reasons why there is need on the part of Christian students for a renewed examination of the whole subject, and also because the recent concentration of the best scholarship, from one side and the other, upon these particular topics justifies us in hoping that renewed examination at this stage will not simply amount to a profitless circuit round a barren doctrinal threshing-floor, but will really yield some fruit of knowledge which may help us to a clearer understanding of the sacramental teaching of the New Testament. Whatever we may think of its qualifications in other respects for the discussion of such a subject as the sacraments, it cannot be doubted that the critical scholarship of the present time is possessed of a body of material and a scientific apparatus which were not within the reach of previous generations of Christian students. No one now questions the fact that the historical treatment to

which the life of Jesus was subjected during the latter portion of the nineteenth century led to a wonderful quickening of the springs of knowledge and thought regarding our Lord's human nature and His life on earth. And there can be just as little doubt that the thorough-going, if often hypercritical, investigations to which in recent years both baptism and the Lord's Supper have been subjected, have done something to clear the jungle-paths of doctrinal study, and to open up fresh points of view; and so have given the hope at least of ultimate arrival at a truer, because more historical, doctrine of the sacraments. The influence of a reasonable criticism has already shown itself in modifications of attitude and statement on the part of some scholarly High Churchmen. And the way may thus be opening for such a return to Scriptural views upon this subject as would do more perhaps than anything else to promote the sense of real Christian unity between those who still stand severely apart from one another, even while they all claim not only to have faith in the one Lord, but to keep the one feast and to practise the one baptism.

I. I have described my subject as "The Sacraments in the New Testament." For it is to the New Testament that we must go, and go first of all, if we wish to discover the proper outlines of any Christian doctrine. The progress of critical science has not weakened, but powerfully reinforced, the Protestant principle of the normative authority of Scripture. The old form of the doctrine of inspiration has been generally abandoned, without doubt; but that does not mean, as is sometimes assumed, that the Church has any the less a positive doctrine on the subject. To Christian people Christ's words are always words of eternal life, and the words of His apostles still come home to the mind of the Church with an authority to which no subsequent utterances can possibly make any claim. Besides, even putting the matter upon the lower

ground of mere historical evidence, the New Testament contains the writings which form the original documents and witnesses of Christian history, the primary deposit in literature of the revelation of God in Christ, the only written records we possess of the mind of Christ Himself. How strange then it appears when even a scholar so eager and candid as Bishop Gore applies himself in his latest work[1] to an exposition of the Eucharist by first setting forth, in the course of between two and three hundred pages, what he takes to be the mind of the Church upon the subject, and then devoting about two dozen pages, towards the end of the volume, to the evidence of the New Testament. And what does he mean by "the mind of the Church"? Not the mind of his own Church at the present time, for no one knows better than he how hopeless it would be to attempt any formulation of a mind so divided against itself as that of the modern Church of England; not the mind of the Reformers, for he declines, and quite properly, to accept their opinions as in any sense binding and authoritative; not the mind of the mediæval Church, for he is a strenuous opponent of the scholastic dogma of transubstantiation; but the mind of the Christian Church during the first four or five centuries, in other words, "the ancient Catholic tradition." Now Dr. Gore fully admits again and again that Scripture is and must be our highest court of appeal. Catholic tradition or ecclesiastical authority, he holds, can never be regarded as absolute or final, except when it can justify itself at the bar of Scripture.[2] Yet he insists that Scripture must be read "in the light of the Catholic Fathers and ancient bishops." "The common and original mind of the Church," he tells us, "is to give us our point of view in approaching the Scriptures." But in saying this he seems to forget the rightful claim of the New Testament to be

[1] *The Body of Christ.* [2] *Ibid.* p. 225 ff.

itself, in the strictest sense, the representative of the Church's common and original mind. How are we to discover that original mind, if we debar ourselves meanwhile from the use of the original documents? Surely it is a strange, inverted, unhistorical process which would arrive at the mind of Christ and His apostles independently of what every one admits to be the immediate and authoritative sources, and would only at length have recourse to these after it had been determined, without their aid, what the original mind of the Church really was. This may still be the method of those who follow "the Catholic tradition," but, at all events, it is not the way of modern historical scholarship. Zahn is only expressing the general view of critical students of every school, when he says that scientific investigation concerns itself less and less with the thoughts of the Fathers and doctors of the Church, and more and more with the original facts themselves.[1]

II. It is to the New Testament, then, that we must primarily go in search of a Christian doctrine of the sacraments. But here we are met by the initial difficulty that in the New Testament itself neither the word sacrament, nor any corresponding general idea, is to be found. As for the word, it is not till we come to Tertullian that we find *sacramentum* employed by any Christian writer to denote either baptism or the Supper.[2] Tertullian's use of the term was evidently suggested, not by its classical meanings, whether legal or military,[3] but by the fact that

[1] *Brot und Wein im Abendmahl der alten Kirche*, p. 1.

[2] The use of the word by Pliny in his account of the worship of the Christians of Bithynia is only an interesting coincidence. See Lecture VIII. p. 341.

[3] No doubt traces of the military meaning are to be found in Tertullian, as when he says, speaking of baptism, "We were called to the warfare of the living God in our very response to the sacramental words" (*Ad Mart.* iii.); but in this case it can only be said that he is taking a suggestion from etymology for a very natural application in practical directions of the idea of the sacrament; a suggestion which is often followed still, with regard especially to the sacrament of the Supper.

in the old Latin versions *sacramentum* had been used as the equivalent of *μυστήριον*, a word which frequently meets us in the Greek New Testament, though never as applied to the sacraments.[1] *Sacramentum*, then, in Tertullian's use of it, simply means a mystery. And if it be asked how it was that the word came to be applied to the sacraments of the Church, the answer is that this was suggested in part by the very nature of the sacraments as symbolic rites with underlying meanings, but also by the fact that in the age of Tertullian the sacraments had come to be regarded by Christians themselves as having a certain analogy to the mysteries of the Græco-Roman world, and had even, in the development of the praxis, incorporated within themselves certain of the ritual observances that belonged to the pagan mystery-rites.[2] But while this explains to us historically how the word sacrament became a technical term in the usage of the Church, it does not help us very greatly in the attempt to fix its proper meaning and application. The word is convenient, no doubt, seeing that we need some term to express the general idea that has to be drawn from the characteristics of the rites which we class together under this name; and it is further sanctioned by early and continued use. But neither its derivation nor its subsequent history is of much service to us in the effort to discover the true and proper meaning

[1] It is applied, indeed, to marriage, which in Eph. v. 32 is called *μυστήριον μέγα*. But marriage has no such special marks as entitle it to be called a Christian sacrament. It was not instituted by Christ, nor is it in any way distinctive of Christians. Its elevation to the rank of a sacrament by the Catholic Church was due in part to a misunderstanding of this very passage. The *sacramentum magnum* (*μυστήριον μέγα*) of the Old Latin and Vulgate versions appeared to justify in this case the Churchly tendency to multiply the number of the sacraments. But the use of the word *sacramentum* in this instance by the early translators no more entitles us to find a sacrament in marriage, than we should be entitled to find one in the "*sacramentum* of godliness" (1 Tim. iii. 16), or the "*sacramentum* of the seven stars" (Rev. i. 20), or the "*sacramentum* of the woman and the beast" (Rev. xvii. 7).

[2] See Anrich, *Das antike Mysterienwesen*, *passim*.

of the Christian sacraments. We have still to look elsewhere in search of a consistent and distinctive conception.

Now, in this matter of endeavouring to define the nature of a sacrament, Anglican High Churchmen are given to expressing themselves in a way which is very perplexing, because it is exceedingly fast and loose. Ever since the days of the Tractarian movement, they have been accustomed to operate extensively with the phrase "the sacramental principle," as an instrument of definition; and in this respect the men of the later Oxford School do not differ from their predecessors. To refer only to the representatives of the *Lux Mundi* circle, this is the method followed alike by Gore, Paget, and Illingworth. From "the sacramental principle" they all set out. But what precisely they mean by this expression, or its underlying idea, it is very difficult to discover. Sometimes, with a view to showing its entire reasonableness, and the manner in which it is rooted inextricably in the very constitution of the world in which we live, they stretch it out so far and wide that it includes the whole relations of nature to spirit, of body to soul, of symbol to reality. Thus Illingworth brings art and music under the sweep of the sacramental principle;[1] while Gore tells us that "handshaking is the sacrament of friendship; kissing, the sacrament of love; the flag, the sacrament of the soldier's honour."[2] Or, coming to the special sphere of religion, they point, by way of explaining the principle which underlies the sacraments, to the use of symbolic rites not only in the ancient Jewish worship, but in all the natural religions down to the lowest fetishism.[3] And the curious circumstance is, that these writers usually appear to imagine that the very familiar facts which they are able to marshal in this fashion under the broad banner of the sacramental principle, are largely

[1] *Divine Immanence*, p. 143 ff.
[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 38.
[3] *Divine Immanence*, p. 128 ff.

unperceived or unappreciated by others who do not accept their sacramental doctrines. Such persons are assumed to know nothing about the true philosophy of nature, or the laws of psychology, or the uses of symbolism in religion, and to be guilty of "a sham spiritualism" which leaves the body "brutish and uncheered," an "unreal spirituality which consists in a barren and boastful disparagement of ritual observances, or of outward things."[1] But now, having made their principle so wide that it really embraces the universe, they suddenly, by a quite unexplained transition, make it so high that it means specifically the embodiment of special divine grace in "sensible objects," by which is denoted both "material ceremonies" and "material substances," in such a manner that these become "the means or instruments of divine energies, the vehicles of saving and sanctifying power."[2] But clearly these are ideas quite distinct from anything that has gone before, ideas which properly ought to be classed under a different "principle" from the one that has hitherto been expounded. Indeed, this is practically admitted by the writers to whom I am referring, for they base their interpretations of the sacramental principle, in this new and transformed conception of it, upon nothing less than the positive institution by Jesus Christ of baptism and the Lord's Supper as two definite material channels through which the divine energies are to be supernaturally dispensed. So far good. Here, at all events, whatever we may think of the significance assigned to these two ordinances, we have a definite use of the word sacrament, and one that can be justified, as we believe, from the New Testament. But now comes another sudden and mysterious transition; for, having elevated the sacramental principle from the level of ordinary symbolism to the height of the two positive institutions of Jesus Christ, they immediately

[1] See especially Paget's essay on "Sacraments" in *Lux Mundi*, *passim*.
[2] Gore, *op. cit.*, p. 36; Paget, *op. cit.*, pp. 406, 416.

proceed to broaden it out again upon this higher plane, and to transmute rites and ceremonies, which have no shadow of a claim to rest upon our Lord's express appointment, into efficacious vehicles of grace *in the very same sense* as that which they have already attributed to baptism and the Eucharist. Thus Bishop Paget writes: "It is most unfortunate that the associations of controversy hinder men from frankly and thankfully recognising the wide range of sacramental action in Christian life." "Differences," he goes on to say, "in the manner of appointment or in the range of application may involve no difference at all in the reality of the power exercised and the grace conveyed."[1] "May involve" sounds cautious; but, as a matter of fact, he assumes at once that no differences *are* involved, and so brings actions and ceremonies for which it is impossible to claim the personal authority of Christ, under the category of "sacramental acts" through which "the spiritual energy of the Church is sacramentally conveyed." Thus, by one leap, we pass from a natural symbolism, of which every thinking being is fully aware, to a magical embodiment of divine grace in "material ceremonies" and "material substances"; and then, by another leap that is no less startling, from an embodiment of grace in baptism and the Lord's Supper, by the immediate institution of our Lord Himself, to its no less certain embodiment in various rites of the later Church, for which it is utterly impossible to claim the authority or sanction of Jesus Christ, and the pagan connections of which, in some cases, it is very easy to trace.[2] And all this is done in the name of "the sacramental principle," which is

[1] Paget, *op. cit.*, p. 424 ff.

[2] Dr. Illingworth frankly admits the irruption of the pagan element, and, indeed, regards it as a historical necessity in accordance with the laws of evolution (*op. cit.*, pp. 141–143). The problem, however, which he does not appear to have faced is the precise bearing of his evolutionary views upon his sacramental theories. He regards it as "inevitable, in accordance with all the laws of historic evolution," that the sacraments of Christ should "attract to themselves the accessories of Jewish and Græco-Roman worship," and weave around themselves a

thus alternately expanded or contracted, lowered or exalted, to suit the exigencies of a theory.

We get little help, then, from so vague a magnitude as the sacramental principle, with what Bishop Paget himself confesses to be its "different and shifting meanings," in our endeavour to arrive at a distinct notion of the sacraments. Paget sees in "the manifold employment" of the principle "that characteristic excellence of Christianity which is secured in the very nature of sacraments, namely, its recognition of the whole problem with which it claims to deal." [1] But there is one preliminary and not unimportant problem, at all events, which it leaves unsolved. It does not tell us plainly what the rites are that are entitled to the name of sacraments. There is a difficulty in believing in the reality of "sacramental grace" in cases where it is left uncertain whether a particular ceremony is a real sacrament or not. And yet, owing to this loose notion of a sacramental principle, there prevailed for centuries the greatest vagueness upon the subject, a vagueness which is illustrated by the fact that in the twelfth century Hugo of St. Victor, in his *De Sacramentis Christianæ Fidei*, enumerates as many as thirty sacraments which had been recognised in the Church.[2] And while eventually seven came to be regarded by Catholics as the proper number, a number, however, which was not ecclesiastically fixed till the Council of Florence in 1439;[3] this finding must be described as purely arbitrary, inasmuch as it has no New Testament authority, and

"sacramental network" of other ceremonies. But the question is, by what right this network of pagan and Jewish ceremonial is elevated to the dignity of the supernatural. Here we have the same unexplained leap as before, though now it is made in the name of evolution.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 425 ff.

[2] The chief historical explanation of the multiplication of the sacraments lies in the fact that, before the idea of a sacrament came to be defined, the Church had adopted numerous ceremonial practices for which there was no authority in Scripture, and which in reality were taken from the religious customs of the surrounding pagan world.

[3] See Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine*, p. 254 ff.

does not proceed upon anything that can be described as a settled principle. How, for example, can marriage, which is in no sense exclusively characteristic of Christians, and rests upon no appointment of Christ, but upon a natural human relationship between the sexes, be classed along with baptism and the Lord's Supper? And how, in particular, can a Church which glorifies celibacy, and regards matrimony as an inferior condition, reasonably elevate the latter at the same time into a special and mysterious channel of the divine grace?

The true way out of this sacramental labyrinth is to attach ourselves to those two institutions of the New Testament for which we can claim a definite institution by Jesus Christ, as the distinctive rites of His Church. Even Roman and Anglo-Catholic writers fully recognise the separateness of baptism and the Supper among all other ordinances, when they describe them as "the two great sacraments," or "the two main expressions of the sacramental principle," or "the vital and distinctive acts of the Christian Church"; and when they further acknowledge that it is in the institution by Christ Himself of these two ordinances that the authoritative affirmation of the sacramental principle must be sought. The point they ought to consider is whether they have any right to speak of sacraments at all, in any kind of equivalent sense, in those cases where no definite appointment by Christ can be alleged. Let us, at all events, note the fact that there are only two ritual observances which spring directly out of the historical revelation of Jesus Christ as given us in the New Testament. These alone can be said to rest clearly upon His personal appointment, and to be bound up with His own word. By these features, baptism and the Lord's Supper are broadly distinguished from all rites and ceremonies devised by the Church herself, however seemly and suggestive to some Christians these

may appear to be. This fact of appointment by Christ puts baptism and the Supper on the level of the original revelation of which they themselves form a part, and makes each of them, in Augustine's phrase, *visibile verbum* —the word of the gospel made visible. For we are not to think of these two ordinances as ordinances merely, even with this proviso added, that they are divinely ordained. In the language of Dr. Dale: "The sacraments are not divinely appointed forms for the expression of our faith in God or our love for Him; they are the expressions of divine thoughts, they are the visible symbols of divine acts."[1] This uniqueness, then, that belongs to them, both as resting upon our Lord's immediate appointment and as embodying within themselves His divine and personal word, separates them absolutely from all other rites and ceremonies whatsoever. And, again, their mutual correspondence, as being connected respectively with the entrance upon the Christian life and the maintenance and strengthening of that same life, justifies us in classing them together under a common name. It is true that no common name is given them in the New Testament, but their close association with each other is certainly implied. Nearly every commentator holds that in the opening verses of the tenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, where Paul speaks of the baptism of the Israelites into Moses, and their participation in the same spiritual meat and spiritual drink (1–4), he is referring to the two sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. This passage in itself goes to justify us in speaking of two sacraments, and in making the necessary abstraction with a view to the formation of a general idea upon the subject.[2] And this

[1] *Lectures on the Ephesians*, p. 358.

[2] Beyschlag says: "Here, then, a certain unexpressed idea of sacrament emerges; it gives us in the two symbolical ordinances instituted by Christ the notion of signs and pledges, to introduce or to confirm God's covenant of grace with the Church" (*N. T. Theology*, ii. 238).

conclusion is confirmed when we find a similar close association of baptism with "the breaking of bread" in the record of the Church's life during her early Pentecostal days (Acts ii. 41, 42). And, notwithstanding the objections of some modern critics, we cannot but maintain the significance of the fact that circumcision and the Passover, the two most distinctive rites of the old covenant—the rite which stamped the Jewish male child as a member of the chosen people, and the rite in which the covenant was renewed from year to year—are brought in the New Testament into the nearest relation with baptism and the Lord's Supper. On the one hand, we have Paul connecting the thought of baptism with "the circumcision of Christ" (Col. ii. 11); and, on the other, the Lord's Supper is represented in all the Synoptic Gospels as springing out of a Passover feast; while Paul again says with regard to Christ's death, of which, in his view, the Supper is the express proclamation (1 Cor. xi. 26), "For our Passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ" (1 Cor. v. 7).

III. Our subject is, "The Sacraments in the New Testament." And the phrase recalls us to the fact that the storms of criticism, which have been beating all round the New Testament writings, compel any one who proposes to use these writings as authoritative sources for the discovery of the truth about the sacraments, to face the main questions which modern criticism has raised regarding them. The very institution by Jesus of baptism and the Lord's Supper, which we have hitherto regarded as fundamental for the proper idea of the sacraments, is widely challenged, as has already been said, and will have to be specially discussed. But, meanwhile, something must be said as to the authority and evidential value of the New Testament generally, and also as to the particular claims of certain of the books with which we shall be more especially concerned.

1. With regard to the New Testament as a whole, it is sometimes asserted, in the name of historical science, that we have no ground for treating this collection of writings as in any sense normative, or for attaching any unique weight to its evidence as to the Christian origins, through some idea that the title "Canonical" carries with it a right to peculiar deference before the bar of historical judgment. "No writing of the New Testament," we have been reminded, "is born with the predicate Canonical. The proposition, 'A writing is Canonical,' only means that the determinative factors of the Church from the second to the fourth century, perhaps after all kinds of vacillations in judgment, declared it to be Canonical." And the same writer goes on to say, "One who treats the idea of the Canon as fixed, submits himself therewith to the authority of the bishops and theologians of those centuries. But if in other respects we do not recognise their authority—and no Protestant theologian does—we are only acting consistently when we bring their authority into question at this point also."[1] The argument has a plausible air, and no doubt it contains an element of truth, so far, namely, as it relates to the absolute fixity of the Canon. But it passes into a fallacy when the essential idea of the Canon, namely, that it is a collection of writings possessed of a special and divine authority, an idea which anticipated all the discussions of the early Fathers and bishops, and which, indeed, these discussions evidently presuppose and start from, is confounded with the quite different and secondary question as to the exact limits of the Canon itself. These limits have often been the subject of dispute on the part of theologians who had no hesitation whatever as to the essential idea on which the Canon is built, or as to the claims to inspiration and authority of all the more im-

[1] Wrede in his *Ausgabe u. Methode der sogenannten Neutestamentlichen Theologie*, p. 11.

portant writings. Luther's disparaging language about the Epistle of James has often been quoted; but it must be remembered that it was precisely the lofty views which Luther took of the Canon as a whole that suggested his doubts as to the Canonical rights of this particular book. And there are Christian scholars at the present time who might feel it difficult to place 2 Peter on a much higher level than they would assign, let us say, to the *Didaché;* but who would not abate one jot of the historic claim of the great body of the New Testament Scriptures to an authority that is quite other and higher than that of any extra-canonical writing. Professor Harnack is usually regarded as a competent and thoroughgoing critic. His views on inspiration, moreover, are not such as are commonly received among ourselves. But with respect to the right of the vast bulk of the New Testament, judged from the historical point of view, to be set in a place by itself as the norm and measure of Christian doctrine, he expresses himself in the most positive manner. "Strictly speaking," he says, "the notion that the New Testament in its whole extent comprehends a unique literature, is not tenable. But it is correct to say that between its most important constituent parts and the literature of the period immediately following there is a great gulf fixed."[1]

2. The historical justification of the claim of the New Testament to speak to us with an absolutely unique authority, depends very largely, without doubt, upon our being able to bring the great mass of the writings within the limits of the apostolic age. If this can be done, it not only furnishes the best guarantee for the accuracy of the record which they contain of the historical revelation of God in Christ, but sets the New Testament authors in the full light and glow of that special inspiration which flowed from personal contact with Jesus Christ Himself, or with those chosen apostles

[1] *History of Dogma*, i. 135.

who had been His constant companions throughout the days of His earthly ministry. And the whole course of recent investigation entitles us to say that, with comparatively few exceptions, this can now be done in the name of historical criticism itself. The strenuous attempts made by Baur and his school, in the interests of their theory of historical development, to bring down the dates of most of the New Testament writings into the second century, have now been completely discredited, and shown to rest on a purely arbitrary extension of the framework of the early Christian history. The great trend of recent criticism, as will be shown afterwards in more detail, has been a steady movement backwards in the direction of the traditional positions.[1] And this being the case, it has an obvious bearing upon the claim of the New Testament writings generally, to stand in a group by themselves as the authoritative records of the Christian revelation, setting before us authentically the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints, and enabling us to build upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone.

3. But even if it is granted that the New Testament writings can properly be described as coming to us from the apostolic age, it may still be held that the various MSS. have been subjected to so much revision and alteration that, as they lie before us now, they are something very different from the original documents. This is the line that is frequently followed in recent criticism of the New Testament. "Source-criticism" and "conjectural-criticism," compilation theories and interpolation theories, play a leading rôle in much of the work that is being done at present in the field of exegetical scholarship. And the tendency of this kind of criticism, it must be confessed, is to produce upon the mind of the reader a feeling of "undefined mis-

[1] Cf. Harnack, *Chronologie der Altchristlichen Litteratur*, vol. i. pp. x, xi.

trust," as Harnack calls it, as if the New Testament were enveloped in "a web of illusions and falsehoods." But before yielding to any such feeling of mistrust or despair, there are certain considerations which the student ought to set clearly before his mind. One is that these analytic critics rarely agree among themselves as to what is primary and what is not, what has been interpolated and what omitted, so that their individual theories "have not been confirmed by progress towards a coherent theory."[1] Wrede, after noting this fact, draws the conclusion that since these differences among the critics show the impossibility of distinguishing between what is original in the tradition and what is secondary, we must be content to draw a distinction between "what is relatively clear and what is doubtful."[2] But instead of coming to this very weak conclusion, by which the whole New Testament is hung up in the air, so to speak, and left floating there in a sea of mist, it is surely open to us rather to conclude that these elaborate attempts at doctrinal reconstruction on the basis of mere conjecture have shown themselves to be self-condemned. Those conflicting schemes of analysis, and the confusions they produce, ought not to be turned to the disadvantage of the subject-matter with which the critics in question have been dealing. They do not really prove anything against the New Testament documents; they only prove that their authors, in forsaking the textual criticism which rests on an objective basis, the basis, namely, of documents and texts, and soaring into the realms of arbitrary supposition, have been dealing with quantities and qualities that altogether elude their grasp.[3] Moreover, the fact must not be lost

[1] See Chase, *The Credibility of Acts* ("Hulsean Lectures"), p. 15.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 62.

[3] Dr. Robertson Nicoll, whose keen instincts as an appreciator of style will be admitted by every one, has frequently pointed out the pitfalls that beset the most ingenious source-criticism even when the critic is dealing with the literature of his own tongue and time, and *a fortiori* when he has to do with a

sight of, that dealers in source-criticism, in their manipulations of the text, have very frequently special theoretical axes of their own to grind. Spitta, for example, who is one of the most ingenious and assiduous of the band, has a theory of the Lord's Supper of which some notice will have to be taken in later lectures. He holds, among other things, that the original Supper had no relation whatever to the Passover, whether external or internal, historical or doctrinal, and that in nothing that our Lord said on the occasion was there the slightest intention to refer to His own death. A theory of this sort, of course, cannot be got to square with the existing texts of the Gospels. And so, in order to make it good, Spitta employs the interpolation expedient very freely. He cuts out one important passage in Mark (xiv. 12–16),[1] and another important passage in John (vi. 51–59).[2] In Luke's account of the institution of the Supper he accepts neither of the two rival texts, the ordinary and the "Western," but adopts a composite reading of his own which rests upon no solid documentary authority.[3] And as he uses the knife with the utmost freedom, he assumes that it was used with an equal absence of hesitation by the early editors of the Gospels. Thus he believes that John's Gospel originally contained an account of the Last Supper, but that this account was soon removed from the text because it showed too plainly that the Supper had no connection with the Passover; and it seemed inexpedient to retain in the document a narrative of the

language that is foreign and dead. "It is past dispute," he writes, "that English criticism is unable, as a rule, to assign authorship to an anonymous contemporary book. It is unable to distinguish between the work of two collaborators. It is unable, in short, to perform any of those achievements which are believed possible when the Scriptures are handled" (*British Weekly*, 8th August 1901).

[1] See his essay, "Die urchristlichen Traditionen über Ursprung u. Sinn des Abendmahls," in his *Zur Geschichte u. Litteratur des Urchristentums*, p. 226 ff.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 218 ff.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 295 ff.

institution of the Supper which was not in harmony with what had come to be the prevailing opinion in the Church.[1]

In Dr. Moffatt's *Historical New Testament* there is a very full, able, and interesting discussion of the conjectural-criticism that rests upon these hypotheses of interpolation and compilation, in the course of which he says some rather severe things about the "literalist" or "worshipper of the *status quo*." The literalist, he affirms, "is to be treated with constant suspicion in New Testament interpretation."[2] But though he has so little confidence in the literalist, by whom he means the man who accepts the best available texts,[3] his graphic characterisations of "the frolic of paradox and conjecture" certainly suggest that the conjecturalist, after all, is a yet more dangerous person to follow in the forest-paths of New Testament interpretation. The literalist, at all events, goes upon a text that is supported by positive documentary evidence; while the conjecturalist pieces his text together by a scheme of his own devising, and not infrequently with a view to supporting some pet doctrinal or historical theory. The question we ought to consider is, whether the most ingenious hypotheses of the various analysts, especially when they are mutually destructive, should be allowed to produce in our minds a feeling of misgiving or suspicion regarding our actual historical documents. And on this point it is satisfactory to be able to make use once more of the testimony of a historical critic at once so able and so liberal as Professor Harnack. Harnack says: "The oldest literature of the Church, treated from the literary-historical point of view, is true and reliable in its chief features and in most particulars. In the whole New Testament there is only one writing,

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 220 f. Cf. his fuller treatment of this point in his essay, "Unordnungen im Texte des vierten Evangeliums," p. 186 ff. of the same volume.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 624.

[3] Dr. Hort is taken as an example, *ibid.*, p. 649.

2 Peter, which probably can be described as pseudonymous in the strictest sense. . . . Moreover, the number of writings that have been interpolated in the second century (as the Pastoral Epistles) is very small, and some of the interpolations are as harmless as those in our song-books and catechisms." [1]

4. But now supposing that it be granted that there is no proper reason for regarding our texts with constant distrust, if we have no better grounds for doing so than those which are furnished by the criticism of conjecture, there is still another difficulty that has been raised in our path, and one which has a very special bearing upon any investigation of the subject of the sacraments. The analytic criticism of which we have been thinking occupies itself only with the question of the text, and seeks to find its way behind our present texts to earlier documents. But a new school, writing in the name of "the scientific history of religion," has been insisting of late that the conjectural-critics are only wasting their time by applying themselves to the illusory task of textual reconstruction, with the idea that they are thus getting back not only to the oldest stratum of written tradition, but to the actual facts of the original history. It is an utterly unscientific procedure, we are now told, to identify the earliest written tradition with the original facts themselves. Even if we have succeeded in getting down to the lowest stratum that can be unearthed from our texts, that is no guarantee for the original facts of history. It reflects the state of contemporary doctrine and practice at the time when the earliest texts were written; but it does nothing more. "The same factors which within the tradition that has been fixed in writing have operated to transform the old in ways that we can recognise, have played, even previous to this, a decisive rôle." Hence

[1] *Chronologie*, vol. i. p. viii.

it is asserted as beyond question that the most important remodelling of the Christian tradition took place within the very first decade of the history, *i.e.* at a period antecedent to the earliest written documents of Christianity.[1] And so, to take the case of the Lord's Supper, the New Testament furnishes us with accounts of the institution of that sacrament which do nothing more than reflect the state of the cultus and the faith and love of the community at the time when those accounts were penned. They enable us to see what Christians of those days believed Jesus to have spoken and done, but they cannot be accepted as furnishing any firm basis for the attempt to discover what actually He did and said.

In answer to this line of argument, it has been pointed out, very justly, that if it is unscientific without further inquiry to identify the oldest tradition known to us with the historical events themselves, it is no less unscientific simply to postulate as a certainty a course of development which makes the Christianity that meets us in our earliest records something quite different from the Christianity of Jesus Christ Himself.[2] Besides, we have to ask whether this transformation of original Christianity within the first ten years of its existence, which is assumed to have taken place, can be justified on any grounds of a historical character. A remodelling of Christianity at the hands of Paul, who was not one of the original apostles; a rapid modification of it after it had been transplanted to Gentile soil: these are theories for which, at least, some show of argument can be made. But in regard to this theory, which comes to us in the name of the new scientific method of the history of religion, we have no data whatever, and from the nature of the case can have none. For

[1] Professor Eichhorn of Halle in his *Das Abendmahl im N.T.* p. 15; cf. Wrede, *Aufgabe u. Methode*, pp. 6, 26, 63.

[2] Carl Clemen, *Der Ursprung des heiligen Abendmahls*, p. 12.

the advocates of the new method insist that over the original history there lies an impenetrable veil. Behind the heavy curtain that hangs in front of the stage, a swift development, we are assured, is going on; but what its precise nature is, it is impossible to say. This only is certain, that when the curtain is at length lifted, it is not the Jesus of actual history nor the Christian facts of the first days that appear before us in the forms of the earliest written tradition. Thus no means are left us of testing the truth of this theory of a rapid transformation during the first years of Christian history, inasmuch as all knowledge is precluded of those original types from which as a starting-point the development would have to be measured.

The theory, therefore, is one of pure assumptions throughout. And if we proceed to inquire whether, at least, it presents some show of probability, it is difficult to see how any such claim can be made on its behalf. For, in the case supposed, we have to do not with the doctrines of a later generation, or with communities far removed from the direct teaching and influence of the apostles, but with the very first years of Christian history, and with the original apostolic community itself. If under the eyes of the Jerusalem apostles, and within the space of ten years, the truth about the origins of Christianity was subjected to a complete metamorphosis, so that we have to do no longer with facts, but merely with religious formulations which find their explanation in the subjective needs and desires of the community,[1] then, instead of speaking of a new and more scientific history of religion, it is time for us to abandon the idea that history can ever be written at all. Granting the perfect honesty

[1] The demands of the community, *i.e.*, were not satisfied by the real Jesus; and so, in accordance with the ordinary laws of demand and supply, the historical tradition had to be remodelled to meet the subjective craving for something higher. See Eichhorn, *op. cit.*, pp. 11, 15.

and sincerity of the apostles, and these surely are no longer in question, granting that they had memories like those of other people, and even an ordinary measure of intellectual sanity, it is impossible to suppose that at the bidding of their subjective feelings, but in some wonderful, unanimous fashion, they could entirely transform the great facts of Christian history within the compass of a single decade. To regard this as a probability is to surrender absolutely the very principle on which all our knowledge of human history is built, the principle, namely, of the credibility of well-authenticated testimony, and to abandon the whole world of the past, either to the vagaries of purely arbitrary opinion, or to the sway of a universal scepticism.

IV. In entering upon a study of the New Testament teaching with regard to the sacraments, we are met not only by general questions of New Testament Introduction such as those that have been referred to, but by the particular questions which literary criticism has raised as to the character and claims of individual books. Owing to the limited nature of our subject, it is fortunately unnecessary for us to traverse the whole field of the New Testament writings, and attempt to arrive at a decision upon all the debated topics of date, authorship, genuineness, sources, and mutual relations. A good many of the books have nothing directly to tell us about the sacraments; their evidence is only of a negative kind—sometimes not even that; and questions of Introduction in these cases need not be entered into with any particularity. And even where such questions require to be discussed more fully, we shall find that, as a rule, they will be most suitably dealt with as they severally emerge in the course of our inquiry. But there are two large problems, of a wider nature than the rest, about which we shall find it most convenient to say something at the present stage. These

are the authorship and evidential value of the Fourth Gospel, and the historical reliability of the Acts of the Apostles. No questions are more fundamental than these for the study of the teaching of Jesus on the one hand, and the growth of apostolic doctrine and institutions on the other. And both of them, in particular, have an immediate and very important bearing upon any attempt to discover the original and proper significance of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

1. In the case of the Johannine problem, as every student is aware, the two opposite schools of opinion have drawn much nearer to each other than they formerly stood.[1] On the one hand, the accumulation of historical evidence in favour of the antiquity of the Gospel, as well as a closer study of the book itself, has completely disposed of the old Tübingen view that it is a work of pure idealism and of very late date, and has made it evident that, at the outside, it cannot be assigned to any period much later than the beginning of the second century, and that it embodies, in any case, a large amount of genuine and authentic tradition. So we have Harnack, while still rejecting the apostolic authorship, bringing the Gospel back to a date which makes the apostolic authorship at least a chronological possibility;[2] and Wendt, again, advocating the theory that just as our Gospel of Matthew is based on the original *Logia* of Matthew the apostle, so the Fourth Gospel, though coming to us in its present form from an unknown author, rests upon a writing of the Apostle John himself.[3] On the other hand, the traditional school, while firmly maintaining the Johannine authorship, is now more ready to admit that the teaching of Jesus in this Gospel has been coloured by the mind through which it passed. Dr. Sanday, for instance,

[1] See Dr. Sanday's paper on the tendency of modern criticism on this subject (*Expositor*, Ser. IV. iv. 321).

[2] He grants a period between 80 and 110. See his *Chronologie*, p. 679.

[3] See his *St. John's Gospel*, *passim*, but especially Chapters II. and VI.

who throughout his whole life as a distinguished New Testament scholar has been a powerful and consistent defender of John's authorship, admits the presence of a subjective element consisting of some infusion of the apostle's later reflection and experience with the original material of objective fact.[1] In spite, however, of this approximation, so far, between the two poles of opinion, it is evident that we have still to distinguish and to choose between two opposing views of the origin of the Gospel. In particular, in any discussion of the sacraments we have to decide in the case of our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus in the third chapter, and His discourse in the sixth chapter on the bread of life, whether we have to do with an account by an apostle of Jesus of the actual words of the Master addressed to actual people, or with utterances which, at all events, have been highly idealised, and now are not so much addressed by Jesus to actual hearers, as by the evangelist himself to his contemporaries.[2]

Now, in this matter it will not do to attempt to run at once with the hare and with the hounds—to take the words in question as the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus Christ, and yet to understand them in a sense which removes them out of all historical relation to the persons to whom He is said to have addressed them. And yet this is what is really done when the words to Nicodemus and the discourse at Capernaum are taken literally and verbally as the words of the Lord, while they are so interpreted as to make Him proclaim the Catholic doctrine of baptismal regeneration to a Pharisee long before the institution of the Christian rite, and announce the mystery of the Real Presence to a pro-

[1] *Expositor*, Ser. IV. v. 390.

[2] Schultzen, *e.g.*, meets the objection that the Jews could not possibly have understood Jesus, if it was the Eucharist that He was referring to in the discourse on the bread of life, by replying that it does not matter whether the Jews could have understood Him or not, since the question is whether the words were understood by the Christians of the evangelist's own time (*Das Abendmahl im N.T.* p. 78).

miscuous crowd that had failed to understand His simpler teaching. We must not confound the two views of the Fourth Gospel, and draw elements at will alternately from the one and from the other. And when we are called upon to make a choice between them, it appears to me that the more reasonable view on every ground is that which regards it as a genuine composition of the Apostle John himself, and a work of authentic history, coloured, no doubt, by the medium through which it has passed, as happens less or more in the case of every historical narrative, but conveying without distortion the substance of Christ's teaching, and the true objective relations in which it was set. Wendt's theory, while so far valuable as reinforcing the growing sense among critical scholars of the genuine historical element in John, splits upon the rock of the unity of the Gospel, a unity which students belonging to every school of opinion have instinctively felt, which made even Strauss compare this Gospel to the seamless robe of Jesus,[1] and which Wendt does not by any means get rid of by describing it as nothing more than a traditional prejudice.[2] Harnack, again, who makes it chronologically possible for St. John to have written the book, but declines nevertheless to believe that it was actually written by the apostle, and ascribes it rather to a certain John the Presbyter, of whose qualifications for such a task we know absolutely nothing, is really furnishing us at this point with a *reductio ad absurdum* of the critical tendency to reject traditional opinions on every possible occasion; a tendency, it must

[1] "This Gospel is itself the seamless tunic of which it tells us, for which men may cast lots, but which they cannot rend" (*Ulrich von Hutten*, Vorrede, p. xliv). On this point of the unity of the Fourth Gospel, Holtzmann is quite as emphatic as Strauss. He repeats the old figure of the "seamless tunic," and declares: "All attempts to draw a clear line of demarcation, whether between earlier and later strata, or between genuine and non-genuine, historical and unhistorical elements, must always be wrecked against the solid and compact unity which the work presents, both in regard to language and in regard to matter."

[2] *St. John's Gospel*, p. 54.

be said, from which Harnack himself is exceedingly free, as compared with many others. It reminds us of the witty description by an American writer, of the decisions arrived at by certain Homeric critics with regard to the origin of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. "They concluded," he said, "that these poems were not the work of Homer, but of another person of the same name."[1] On the traditional view of it, John's Gospel undoubtedly presents many difficult problems to the New Testament student. But the difficulties are still greater on any view that rejects the ancient tradition of its apostolic authorship; and, with such qualifications as have been suggested, it is to the traditional view that we shall adhere in dealing with any evidence from this Gospel that bears, or is supposed to bear, upon the sacraments.[2]

2. Turning now to the Book of Acts, we find ourselves confronted by a question which concerns our present study even more deeply than that of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel. The old tendency-criticism theory of Acts, in the extreme form which was advocated by Baur and Zeller, has entirely broken down. No one now believes that the book is "a late controversial romance," an elaborate *eirenicon*, designed to hold the balance between contending Petrine and Pauline parties in the Early Church. Instead of these extreme tendency-theories, however, we have to-day various equally extreme theories, which come to us in the name of source-criticism, and which seek to resolve the book into a thing of shreds and patches finally pieced together in the early years of the second century by some unknown *redactor*.

[1] On the fact that the exploitation of John the Presbyter, in the interests of a theory of the non-apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel, is no simplification of the problems which the Gospel presents, see the remarks of Mr. Headlam in his chapter on "The Dates of the N.T. Books" in *Criticism of the New Testament* ("St. Margaret's Lectures"), p. 173 ff.

[2] For a recent and admirable summary in favour of St. John's authorship, see Professor Marcus Dods in the Introduction to his Commentary on the Gospel, *Expositor's Greek Testament*, vol. i.

Now, both tendency-criticism and source-criticism have their own value when rightly understood and properly applied. Tendency, in the sense not of a conscious discolouring of the facts, but of an attempt to interpret them correctly, is a characteristic of every historian with any gift of historical insight and any feeling for historical perspective. And the writer of Acts certainly appears to have had a definite plan in his mind, by which he was guided in the selection and arrangement of his material. As for sources, it is plain that he must have had them, both of an oral and a written kind. And recent source-criticism, although, as has been said, its favourite methods of analysis are, for the most part, exceedingly arbitrary and unconvincing, has done good service, at all events, by reminding us that the writer of Acts depended upon authorities, and so did not write history out of his own head, or supply, like some of the source-critics themselves, a pound of imagination to every ounce of ascertained fact.

But while it is certain that the author had sources, sources which would vary in immediacy and value, and while it must be maintained that, being human, he saw the facts in the light of his own faith and knowledge, and through the atmosphere of contemporary custom and belief, it cannot be admitted that in Acts we have not so much a history of the Church during the first Christian generation as the ideas of a later writer regarding that history—a commentary, as it has been called, rather than a text.[1] There might be something to say for such a view, if it were absolutely proved that the book was composed by some person unknown, at a time when all the primary witnesses had passed away, so that the writer, lacking any direct contact with the historical

[1] Cf. Dr. Moffatt's remark: "As a historical document, not merely for the period 75–100, but for some points in the age of which it treats, Acts is a most serviceable and invaluable writing" (*op. cit.*, p. 419).

realities, was left free so to idealise his materials that little more than "a genuine core" of history is left. But within recent years a reasonable criticism has tended more and more to the view that the book was written not much later than the year 80, a conclusion which is strongly confirmed by the researches of classical students like Professor W. M. Ramsay on the relations between the Early Church and the Roman Empire,[1] and which makes it perfectly possible for Luke to have been the author.[2] And as the critical study of the book has also gone far not only to confirm the Lucan origin of the "we" sections, but to establish a unity of authorship between those sections and the rest of the work,[3] it is hardly too much to claim, as Dr. Chase does in his recent "Hulsean Lectures," that the traditional view of the authorship of Acts is really the critical view, namely, that it comes to us along with the Third Gospel from the pen of Luke the "beloved physician" and faithful companion of St. Paul.[4] As for Luke's sources, a subject on which much has been written, some very competent students of Acts have been led of late to the conclusion that certain phenomena of style, which they themselves were at first inclined to attribute to the use of different literary sources, are more naturally explained on the simpler hypothesis of instinctive variations of manner on the part of a sympathetic writer, and that Luke depended much less upon earlier documents, and much more upon personal intercourse with primary authorities, than is frequently assumed. Granted the possibility that Luke was the author of Acts, and we

[1] See his *St. Paul the Traveller*, p. 386 ff.

[2] Even Holtzmann, while advocating a later date and a non-Pauline authorship, admits that if 80 or thereabout be taken as the *terminus ad quem*, it is conceivable that Luke himself was the author (*Hand-Commentar. Acts*, Dritte Auflage, p. 8).

[3] See Bartlet's article on "Acts," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 10th edition, xxv. 60.

[4] *The Credibility of the Book of Acts*, p. 296.

shall find that there is no part of the history contained in the book that may not have been communicated to him by personal eye-witnesses.[1] Hence, while it is probable that Luke made use of written documents, it is not impossible that many, if not most, of these documents were nothing else than notes of conversations with personal witnesses which he himself had written down; so that instead of speaking so much about his sources, in the sense at least of literary sources, we should rather think of his authorities, and should find them in those "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word" on whose testimony he rests the claim of his work to be an accurate history.

I believe, then, that we are justified by a scientific but sober criticism in holding that in Acts we have an account of early Christianity which is thoroughly reliable in all leading points. It may be that such a writer as Professor Ramsay has somewhat exaggerated the claims of Luke as a great philosophic historian, and we may need the reminder that the author of Acts was neither "a New Testament Thucydides" nor "a first-century Mommsen."[2] But without claiming for Luke all that has sometimes been claimed on his behalf, we believe that we have good reason, at all events, to claim for him nothing less than he demands for himself, namely, that his work rests on the testimony of the original witnesses and ministers of the word, that in it he has "traced the course of all things accurately from the first," and that it aims at imparting "the certainty" concerning the Christian tradition (Luke i. 2–4). It is true, of course, that the passage in which Luke asserts his character and claims as a historian occurs in the preface to the Gospel, and not in the Acts itself. But even if we do not choose to accept the very probable view that originally

[1] See Chase, *op. cit.*, p. 15 ff.; Bartlet, "Acts" in *Century Bible*, p. 22 ff.
[2] Professor Adeney, "Luke" in *Century Bible*, p. 4.

the two books circulated together as parts of a single work, and that the preface to the Gospel was really an introduction to the whole,[1] it can be hardly questioned that, as the two books were certainly written by the same author, that author would be as careful in the one case as in the other to satisfy his "historical conscience"; while, as regards the apostolic history, it must be remembered, the original authorities were more within his personal reach than they were in the case of the history of Jesus. Even in respect to the speeches and sermons in Acts, which are of special importance for our present investigation, we have every reason to believe that what Luke gives us is substantially what was actually said. The view that these addresses are "free compositions" due to dramatic idealisation, which are to be placed on the same level as the imaginary speeches often put by the Greek and Latin historians into the mouths of their leading figures, according to the literary habits of the time, is one that does not bear the slightest critical examination. The discourses have been summarised, no doubt, and are reproduced by the author in a literary style of his own. But to imagine of Luke, and much more of some unknown author towards the end of the first century, that he was capable of writing all these speeches and sermons out of his own thoughts, is to attribute to him such marvellous powers of historical imagination as would throw far into the shade Thucydides and Tacitus, and every other great

[1] This view is strongly confirmed by recent investigations of the "Western" text by Blass and others. The fact that it is in Luke's Gospel and in Acts that "Western" readings are most numerous, goes to prove that before the Gospels were formed into a separate collection, the Lucan books circulated together as a single work. And Dr. Chase points out that the view which regards the preface to the Gospel as a preface to both parts of Luke's history is corroborated by the phraseology of the preface itself, and especially by the expressions: "Those matters which have been fulfilled among us," "ministers of the word," "to write unto thee in order" (Luke i. 1, 2, 3). See Chase, *op. cit.*, pp. 6–7, 16 ff.

historian that ever lived. The theological standpoint of the Petrine speeches, in particular, is such as no Gentile Christian, writing more than a generation after, much less a Gentile Christian writing towards the close of the century, could possibly have conceived for himself; and can only be explained on the assumption of their true historical character.[1] And as reasonable critics do not question that the author in his earlier work gives us a genuinely historical account of the words of Jesus, there is every ground to believe that in this second part of his narrative he furnishes us with a version not less historical of the words of Peter and Paul.

And now, having cleared the ground in some measure by these preliminary discussions and statements as to what we are to understand by the sacraments of the New Testament, and what right we have to go to the New Testament writings for authoritative guidance upon the subject, I shall briefly indicate, in closing, the plan which I propose to follow in the further course of these lectures. Taking up baptism first, I shall deal in the next lecture with its institution by Jesus Christ, its relations to preceding historical baptisms, and its meaning as appointed by our Lord. In the third lecture I shall speak of the general apostolic doctrine of baptism, as that is to be gathered, first from the record in Acts of the preaching and practice of the original apostles and the primitive community, and then from the other non-Pauline writings of the New Testament. Paul's teaching regarding baptism demands separate consideration, on the ground alike of its amount and its distinctiveness; and lecture four, accordingly, will deal with the Pauline doctrine, as that is suggested in Luke's narrative of the apostle's own conversion

[1] Cf. Headlam, "Acts" in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, i. 33; Bernard in his chapter on "The Historical Value of the Acts of the Apostles" in *Criticism of the New Testament* ("St. Margaret's Lectures"), p. 22 ff.; and especially Chase, *op. cit.*, pp. 122 ff., 159.

and baptism and subsequent missionary activity, and directly indicated in the Pauline Epistles themselves. In the fifth lecture I shall speak of the teaching of the New Testament generally, with regard to the subjects, mode, administrator, and formula of baptism, and the relation of these matters to the general baptismal doctrine. In this connection, and as reflecting some light upon the New Testament at points where its testimony is not explicit, use will be made of illustrations and confirmations which come from the literature of the early post-apostolic Church. Passing next to the Lord's Supper, I shall devote two lectures to the Supper of Jesus in the upper room, dealing in the sixth with the historical facts, and in the seventh with their doctrinal significance. The eighth lecture will be devoted to the Lord's Supper in the apostolic Church, with regard especially to its outward connections and form. In lecture nine we shall consider Paul's doctrine of the Lord's Supper; for here also, as in the case of baptism, Paul's teaching requires separate treatment. Finally, in the concluding lecture, I shall endeavour to gather up any New Testament evidence that remains, and to glance also at the manner in which the later literature of the Early Church serves as a commentary upon the teaching of the New Testament itself.

LECTURE II.

Baptism instituted by Jesus: its Historical Relations and Meaning.

In entering upon a study of the New Testament teaching with regard to baptism, our earliest task must be to discover what Jesus Christ Himself says on the subject, and what meaning His words yield when examined in the light of their historical connections and by means of a careful exegetical method. And first of all, we must face the question whether Jesus ever instructed His disciples to baptize, whether the rite can thus properly be said to owe its institution to the Master. It may surprise us, on first looking into this matter, to discover how scanty in amount is the direct evidence that the ordinance rests expressly upon an injunction of Jesus. Once only, namely, in the well-known passage at the end of Matthew's Gospel, is the statement distinctly made that He commanded His disciples to baptize. "Go ye therefore," the words run, "and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. xxviii. 19). In Mark's Gospel, it is true, we have a parallel passage, in which He is represented, not indeed as instructing His disciples to baptize, but as implying that they will do so in connection with their preaching of the gospel. "Go ye into all the world," we read, "and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth, shall be condemned" (Mark xvi.

15, 16). But as it is now agreed by nearly all scholars, on the authority of the best MSS., that the last twelve verses of Mark did not form a part of the original Gospel, but were added by a later hand, it is impossible to say whether or not we have to do here with a statement that possesses original and independent value. There are those who regard it as a real strand from the original tradition, and some interesting evidence has been alleged in favour of its having come from the pen of that Aristion who is mentioned by Papias as one of the disciples of the Lord.[1] But the view more commonly taken, and which appears to have most evidence on its side, is that it is simply an early compilation derived from the statements of the other Synoptic evangelists, so that it does not do more than reflect the ideas that prevailed in the community at the time when it was written.[2]

Passing to Luke, we find that he has nothing to say about the institution of baptism, a fact which is all the more noticeable because he records a missionary commission similar to the one which in Matthew is bound up with the instruction to baptize. He represents our Lord, after His resurrection, as saying to the Eleven and them that were gathered with them, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached unto all nations, beginning from Jerusalem"; but he makes no mention of a baptism that is to accompany the preaching of the gospel (Luke xxiv. 47). And when we come to the fourth evangelist, we find that he also is absolutely silent as to any baptismal commission being given by Jesus to the Church.

Now, certainly all this is striking. Particularly striking is the silence of Luke at the very point where we might have expected him to speak, namely, when he is reporting

[1] See Mr. F. C. Conybeare's article, "Aristion, the Author of the last Twelve Verses of Mark" (*Expositor*, IV. viii. p. 241).

[2] See H. J. Holtzmann, *Hand-Commentar*, *in loco*.

words of Jesus as to the universal proclamation of the gospel of repentance and remission of sins. To any theory that would exalt baptism to the central place in the propagation of Christianity, these silences of three of the evangelists appear to be little short of fatal. For, assuming that Jesus did speak the words ascribed to Him in Matthew, it is difficult to believe that the other evangelists would have omitted to report them, if they had thought that in these words He was bestowing upon the Church the essential means by which salvation was to be communicated to men. And even when we take an altogether different view of the sacrament from that which regards it as the medium of regeneration, we have to face serious difficulties and objections before we can vindicate the common Christian belief that in baptism we possess a holy rite which was expressly ordained for the Church by the risen Jesus.

If, then, Matt. xxviii. 19 is the only original passage in the New Testament in which our Lord is said to have instituted the ordinance of Christian baptism, the critical question resolves itself very largely into one of the historical value of Matthew's statement. Now, regarding the text of Matthew at this point, there is no dispute. The verse occurs in all our ancient authorities, and textual criticism has nothing to say against it. But none the less, a powerful phalanx of distinguished critics, especially in Germany, and not only those of the most advanced type, but even such writers as Weiss, Weizsäcker, and Harnack, have declared Matthew's representation to be historically untenable.[1] Harnack, in view of his weight as a critical historian, and the wide circulation which his writings have obtained among English-speaking students, may fitly be

[1] Against this, of course, we must set the fact that the genuineness and authenticity of the words are strongly upheld in Germany by Zahn, Cremer, and other eminent critical writers, and are accepted without hesitation by nearly all the best representatives of English scholarship at the present time.

taken as a representative of this position. And Harnack affirms in the most unqualified manner, "It cannot be directly proved that Jesus instituted baptism, for Matt. xxviii. 19 is not a saying of the Lord."[1] Divers reasons have been given for this very unfavourable judgment of Matthew's statement. Harnack follows up the assertion just quoted by alleging two reasons: "(1) It is only a later stage of the tradition that represents the risen Christ as delivering speeches and giving commandments. Paul knows nothing of it. (2) The Trinitarian formula is foreign to the mouth of Jesus, and has not the authority in the apostolic age which it must have had if it had descended from Jesus Himself." Both of these, it is evident, are reasons which rest upon pretty wide assumptions; and, in any case, they must be pronounced very inadequate as a foundation for the dogmatic utterance by which they are preceded. But Harnack's brief statement is abundantly supplemented by Scholten and Holtzmann, to whom he specially refers us for fuller information, and by many others as well who have written more particularly upon the subject.[2] It is somewhat difficult to classify the various objections, coming as they do from so many different quarters of the field of criticism, and tending in some cases to run into one another. But I shall endeavour to indicate as clearly as possible the main lines of stricture.

1. One objection of a rather general nature, repeatedly pressed by Holtzmann and others, is that Matt. xxviii. 19 belongs to a class of passages peculiar to the first evangelist, which canonise the dogmatic, constitutional, and liturgical situation in the Jewish-Christian circles for which

[1] *History of Dogma*, i. 79.

[2] See especially Scholten, *Die Taufformel*, p. 4 ff.; Holtzmann, "Die Taufe im NT.," *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, 21er Jahrgang, viertes Heft, p. 402 ff., and *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 378 ff.; Teichmann, "Die Taufe bei Paulus," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 1896, Heft 4, p. 357 ff.

the First Gospel was written.[1] These passages, it is held, bear clearly upon them the stamp of a later age, which felt the necessity of sanctioning a rite that had come to be practised by referring it back to Christ Himself. This objection, however, evidently depends upon certain critical views as to the composition of the narrative which, to employ his own phrase regarding the First Gospel, are "peculiar to" Holtzmann and his school. It is a kind of criticism which is built on large but very precarious presuppositions; and if we are not prepared to start from the hypothesis that what we have before us in Matthew is not a record of the original tradition, but a narrative deliberately constructed for the purpose of canonising the later doctrine and practice in certain circles of the Church by attributing them to the teaching of Jesus, so that this, that, and the other statement are nothing more than the "peculiarities" of the writer, it would be useless to attempt to discuss the question whether or not this passage in particular bears clearly upon it the stamp of a later age.

2. Another ground of objection of a wide and general kind is connected with prevailing ideas as to the nature of our Lord's resurrection. The old high-and-dry naturalism has been largely abandoned by recent critics of the resurrection story; we have a significant illustration of that in the attempt of a writer like Keim to find, by means of what has been called his "telegram-theory," an objective explanation of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus.[2] The critical treatment of the narratives of the resurrection, very largely through Ritschlian influences, has become much more subtle than it used to be, and yet hardly less negative. It is no longer denied that Jesus rose from the dead, but it is affirmed that we have no

[1] See Holtzmann, "Die Taufe im NT.," p. 402; Teichmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 357, 370 f. Other passages supposed to belong to this class are xvi. 16–18, xviii. 15–18.

[2] *Jesu von Nazara*, iii. 605.

ground for believing that He resumed for a while His earthly life, that He met His disciples on something of the old terms of intimacy, and gave them fresh instructions and commandments before His final departure to the presence of His Father. A distinction is drawn between the Easter message of the empty grave and the Easter faith which had to be held even in the absence of that message.[1] No faith can be built, we are told, upon the Gospel narratives of the forty days. They are evidently legendary, and belong to a later stage of the tradition. Paul, says Harnack, knows nothing of a risen Jesus who delivers speeches and gives commandments. And Scholten, one of the two writers to whom he expressly refers us, develops this position at length. He points to the fact that in passages like Rom. viii. 34, and Eph. i. 20, the resurrection and the ascension appear to be identical. The resurrection is a resurrection to God's right hand. No room is left for a second earthly life between the resurrection from Hades and the ascension to heaven. And it is not compatible with this oldest representation, he maintains, that Jesus came back to earth to give His apostles the command to baptize.[2] To which the answer is, that in the passages which Scholten quotes Paul is not speaking as a historian of the life of Jesus, but is simply dealing, for doctrinal purposes, with those great moments in the work of Christ which bear upon the Christian salvation. "It is God that justifieth," he cries, "who is he that shall condemn? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at

[1] See Harnack's *What Is Christianity?* p. 160 ff. Harnack tells us that the story of the doubt of Thomas and the blessing pronounced by Jesus upon those who have not seen and yet have believed, is written down in the Fourth Gospel, "for the exclusive purpose of impressing upon us that we must hold the Easter faith, even without the Easter message." But this is to miss entirely the very point of the narrative. Thomas was rebuked, not for refusing to do without the Easter message, but for not believing that message when he received it.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 5–6.

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the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. viii. 33, 34). Surely it stands to reason that we could not expect Paul, in the course of such an argument, to pause between the mention of the resurrection and the mention of the intercession at God's right hand, in order to speak of the appearances of Jesus to His disciples? He does not interpose between what he says of the death and what he says of the resurrection any reference to the burial of Jesus, or to the manner in which His spirit was occupied during the period of disembodiment. Why, then, should he speak of the days between the resurrection and the ascension, if these had no immediate bearing on his present argument?

There are some scholars who have felt themselves unable to set aside the weighty evidence that comes from various quarters in favour of the direct institution of baptism by Jesus, while yet they have been strongly influenced by the critical tendency to minimise, if not to reject altogether, the Gospel narratives of the resurrection appearances. The attempt has accordingly been made to find a place for the institution of baptism by Jesus at some period previous to His death. Some have gone back to the hour in which Jesus said, "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished" (Luke xii. 50). Keim, again, would assign the institution of both sacraments to the night on which Jesus was betrayed.[1] And the late Professor Bruce, with the apologetic purpose of showing that even on the naturalistic view of the resurrection it is not necessary to conclude that Christian baptism does not rest on the Lord's personal authority, went so far as to say that it is conceivable that Jesus gave the direction concerning the rite on some occasion previous to His death, say on the eve of His passion, and at the same

[1] *Jesu von Nazara*, iii. 286.

time that the Holy Supper was instituted.[1] Such theories, however, have little to recommend them. They are really arbitrary expedients for avoiding the difficulty supposed to be created by a narrative which makes Jesus speak the words regarding baptism at a time subsequent to His death. There is no hint in the New Testament itself that the formal institution of the rite took place at some earlier period in the ministry; and it is only on grounds of a purely hypothetical nature that we can be asked to believe that this was the case.

3. Passing from this wider and looser sort of criticism, we come to a more direct line of objection based upon a comparative study of the texts of the Synoptic evangelists. Scholten states the case here very fully and clearly. Among other things, he points out that the words reported in Matthew are not found in the genuine text of Mark (Mark xvi. 1–8), which preceded the redaction of the Canonical Matthew. It is not likely, he says, that they were present in the supposed lost conclusion of Mark, since Luke, who numbered Mark, at all events the Proto-Mark, among his sources, does not appear to be aware of the appointment of baptism by Jesus; and we cannot suppose that he would have been intentionally silent if he had known of it.[2] Now, without doubt, as we have said already, an argument like this tells powerfully against any view which ascribes to baptism the central and essential place in Christ's gospel of redemption. If Jesus appointed baptism as the very means of salvation, and if the rite was so understood by the apostles and the Early Church, it is difficult indeed to see how a careful writer like Luke, whose express aim it was to set forth in their due order and proportions the things which were fully established in the faith of the Church, should refer to a commission to preach repentance and remission of sins

[1] *Kingdom of God*, p. 257. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 4 f.

in Christ's name unto all nations, without making the slightest reference to the baptism that was to accompany the preaching of the word. If, however, baptism was intended by Jesus, and was understood by His disciples, to be a rite possessed indeed of a real value, but altogether subordinate to "the word of faith," the case is quite different. It is impossible to lay it down as a canon of criticism, that if one evangelist makes a statement which is not found in the others, that statement immediately becomes liable to suspicion. A sane and reasonable criticism rather inclines to find in the fact of occasional independence, side by side with general interdependence, a confirmation of the trustworthiness of the several narratives. Such independence assures us that a later writer does not simply repeat in a mechanical fashion what has been said by an earlier one, but, while stamping with his own approval what he does repeat, feels himself free at the same time to weave into his narrative fresh strands from that original tradition from which all our Gospels have been derived.[1]

4. When we come to the contents of the verse, we are met by still another series of objections to its genuineness. Much has been made by some critics of the alleged irreconcilability of Matthew's narrative with Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians that he thanks God that he has baptized so few in the Corinthian Church (1 Cor. i. 14).[2] This statement is held to amount to proof positive that Paul knew nothing of the command to "make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them." Teichmann maintains that if the first disciples had ascribed the importance to baptism which is found in the Matthew passage, Paul, who was so careful to uphold his equal authority as an apostle, would not have deviated from the practice of the rest.[3] But is not this to

[1] Cf. Hort, *Christian Ecclesia*, pp. 8–9.
[2] So, *e.g.*, Holtzmann, Teichmann, and McGiffert.
[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 370 ff.

lose sight of the fact, which Harnack freely admits, that Paul knows of no other way of receiving the Gentiles into the Christian communities than by baptism, and to speak as if his having refrained, for certain specified reasons (1 Cor. i. 15, 17), from baptizing his converts with his own hands, indicates some indifference as to whether they were baptized or not? As for Paul's claim to be as much an apostle as any of the Twelve, without doubt this was a point on which he laid the utmost stress. But in allowing others to baptize where he himself had preached, he was only doing as Peter did with his converts in the house of Cornelius, when he "commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." And neither in Peter's case nor in that of Paul does this imply any falling short of the view of baptism that is set before us in Matthew. For the words in the baptismal commission do not ascribe any mysterious efficacy to the rite. They simply lay down the rule for Christ's messengers, that baptism is to accompany disciple-making. And all our evidence goes to show that both Paul and Peter invariably saw to it that, on profession of their faith in Jesus Christ, their converts were baptized.

Sometimes a special argument against the historicity of the verse is found in the universalistic prescription as to disciple-making with which the command to baptize is associated. Scholten maintains that the later narratives regarding Peter, and especially Peter's attitude in the case of Cornelius, may be held as proving that it was only through a special revelation, and by the light of subsequent events, that the apostle was led to give his consent to the admission of Gentiles into the Christian Church.[1] But this is a clear case of confounding a fresh revelation as to a method with a previous revelation as to a fact. It was not the admission of Gentiles into the Church that filled Peter with astonishment in the house of the centurion at Cæsarea.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

He was already familiar with the idea that Gentiles should be welcomed into the fellowship of the new covenant, as they had been welcomed into the fellowship of the old one. We have a striking illustration of this fact, when we find that one of the seven deacons, who were elected at a very early stage in the history of the Jerusalem community, was not a Jew, but "a proselyte of Antioch" (Acts vi. 5). Hitherto, however, Peter had not doubted that it was by the way of Judaism that Gentiles must seek to draw near to Christ. They must be circumcised after the custom of Moses, if they hoped to be saved. But now he finds that God's plan is much simpler and grander than he and his fellow-apostles had thought. Those men at Cæsarea were not proselytes, but uncircumcised Gentiles; and yet upon them the Holy Ghost was poured out, as on the first disciples at the beginning. And so, by and by, when the question came up formally before the Jerusalem conference, whether or not Gentiles must submit to circumcision before they could be received into the Church, Peter rested his decision in the matter upon the events at Cæsarea, reminding his hearers that God had shown that no difference was to be made between the circumcised and the uncircumcised, since faith was the only thing needful as regards eligibility for salvation. "God," he said, "made no distinction between them and us, cleansing their hearts by faith."

In his *Historical New Testament*, Dr. Moffatt makes a good deal of this same line of argument. "The universal mission," he writes, "can hardly have been known to the first disciples, or else they lived in flagrant disobedience of their Master's solemn command, and only reluctantly recognised its fulfilment in the Pauline gospel." And he speaks rather contemptuously of "the desperate plight to which literalists are reduced" in this matter, as illustrated by Dr. Hort's suggestion that in their recognition of Paul's special call as the apostle of the Gentiles, and in their

agreement and fellowship with him, the Twelve were in effect carrying out the Lord's commission.[1] Such a positive command, he maintains, could not have been fulfilled in this way. "It demanded active personal propaganda on the part of the disciples, and this is precisely what was not forthcoming, to judge from our records of the apostolic age."[2] Well, no doubt it is true that until Paul appeared on the scene the apostolic Church had not come to a full sense of its missionary calling. But it has often happened since that Churches and individuals, into whose thoughts no doubt ever fell of the genuineness of the divine commission at the end of Matthew, have not fully realised its meaning and urgency till God sent into their midst some flaming missionary personality—a Xavier, a Zinzendorf, a Carey, an Alexander Duff.[3] In regard to the Twelve, signs are not wanting that even from the very first their eyes were lifted up to those wide horizons of gospel ministry to which their Lord had appointed them. In Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost we find him saying, "For to you is the pro-

[1] *Christian Ecclesia*, pp. 85–90.

[2] *Historical New Testament*, p. 648 f. It is a little amusing to find Dr. Moffatt frankly saying, "It is very tempting to regard the whole commission, verses 18–20, or even 16–20, as a later addition"; but adding, "The main drawbacks are the absence of a textual basis and the abrupt state of what would be the original Matthew" (p. 649). This suggests a clever surgeon who has laid some one on his table, and feels it "very tempting" to saw off his legs; but who has to admit, as the "main drawbacks" to the operation, that the limbs of his subject are perfectly sound, and that if they were removed, his body would terminate rather abruptly. It is interesting to compare a critic's temptation to regard the great commission as no word of Jesus, but a later fabrication, with the way in which these same words came to Dr. Livingstone, "found" him, as Coleridge would have said, in an hour of sore trial. "Felt much turmoil of spirit," he writes in his diary, "in view of having all my plans for the welfare of this great region and teeming population knocked on the head by savages to-morrow. But I read that Jesus came and said, 'All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations; and lo, *I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*' It is the word of a gentleman of the most sacred and strictest honour; and there is an end on't." (Entry in Livingstone's diary for 14th January 1856. See Blaikie's *Personal Life of David Livingstone*, p. 181.)

[3] Cf. Dr. R. J. Drummond's *Apostolic Teaching and Christ's Teaching*, p. 157.

mise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him" (Acts ii. 39). And again, in his sermon in Solomon's porch, he reminds the people that the days have come when the promise is about to be fulfilled that in Israel all the families of the earth shall be blessed (Acts iii. 25). But alongside of this it has to be remembered that there were certain words of the Lord, addressed specially to the Twelve, which might naturally lead them to believe that personally they were to stand in a peculiar relation to the House of Israel. In the regeneration, He said, they were to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 30). Moreover, according to Luke, Jesus had instructed them to begin from Jerusalem the work of evangelising the world (Luke xxiv. 27), and had implied that they were to preach in all Judæa and Samaria before going forth to the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts i. 8).[1] Further, even if we assume that only the Eleven were present when the universal commission was given, a doubtful assumption in view of certain statements in both Luke and John,[2] at all events the words were addressed to the apostles as representing the whole Church no less than was the case at the institution of the Lord's Supper. And when the Twelve recognised that God had made Paul an apostle just as truly as themselves, and had called men like Barnabas, and Silas, and Apollos, as well as Paul, to that special work of preaching to the Gentiles, for which their own birth and education rendered them much less fit, it argues neither ignorance nor forgetfulness of the Church's missionary commission, but rather a very definite recollection of it, when they agreed that such men should go unto the Gentiles,

[1] Similarly, it is to be noticed, even Paul himself, though expressly set apart by God to preach Jesus among the Gentiles (Gal. i. 16), yet, as a matter of fact, made a point of preaching to the Jews first. See Rom. i. 16, and Acts, *passim*.

[2] Luke xxiv. 47 (cf. 33); John xx. 19 ff. See Westcott, *Gospel of St. John*, p. 294; Hort, *Christian Ecclesia*, p. 32 ff.

while they themselves wrought among the circumcision. The familiar principle of the division of labour in the things of the gospel, by which, while the great commission comes to every preacher of Christ, some preach to their fellow-countrymen and others go to the heathen, was just as applicable then as now. On every ground, then, it appears quite unnecessary that we should force ourselves to a choice between the alternatives of supposing, on the part of the original apostles, either entire ignorance of the Church's universal commission, or flagrant disobedience of their Master's command. And in view of the account we have, not merely in Acts xv., but in the second chapter of Galatians, of the attitude to Paul of Peter, James, and John at the time of the Jerusalem conference, in view, too, of what we know as to Peter's previous action in the case of Cornelius, it is surely rather misleading to say that the first disciples reluctantly recognised the fulfilment of the universal commission in the Pauline gospel. We might as well say that a Presbytery reluctantly recognises the fitness of a young man to preach the gospel, because it carefully examines his credentials of character and scholarship, and desires to hear something of the message he intends to proclaim, before it gives him the right hand of fellowship and a definite commission to go forth into the world as an ambassador of Jesus Christ.

5. I have kept to the last a difficulty which is felt by many to be the most serious of all—the fact that baptism is associated in this verse with the use of the Trinitarian formula. Some scholars who hold to the genuineness of the verse in other respects, are inclined to escape from this last difficulty by conceding the possibility that the formula, at least, was not spoken by Jesus, but inserted into the *logion* at a later time, in accordance with what had come to be the ordinary liturgical usage. But apart from the fact that there is no textual basis for excising this part of the verse,

it must be remembered that if some difficulties would thereby be avoided, others would be created, which, to say the least, are equally great. Besides, when we look at the chief objections, they do not appear to be overwhelming, except upon certain question-begging presuppositions. The formula, Harnack tells us, is "foreign to the mouth of Jesus." But if we accept the account of our Lord's parting discourse in John xiv.–xvi. as a substantial reproduction of words that He actually spoke, we certainly find there an anticipation of such an association of the Son and the Holy Ghost with the Father as is distinctly expressed in the baptismal formula.[1] And if we are not aware of any good reason why we should cease to believe the statements of all the evangelists that Jesus not only rose from the dead, but met with His disciples after He was risen, and gave them His parting instructions before He ascended to the Father, it will appear not merely natural, but altogether inevitable, that the instructions then spoken should partake of the character of fresh revelations, and should not be absolutely limited by the utterances of the previous ministry, or deserve, if they go beyond them, to be described as "foreign to the mouth of Jesus."

As for Harnack's further objection, that the Trinitarian formula had not the authority in the apostolic age which we should expect, this raises the whole question of the baptismal formula, which will have to be specially discussed in a future lecture. Meanwhile the fact must be noted, that apart from the present passage the New Testament speaks only of a baptism into the name of Jesus Christ, and never of a baptism into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The explanation may be, as some have held, that the threefold formula was really used all along, and that when we read of baptism into the name of Christ, this is not a formula, but simply an expression of

[1] Cf. xiv. 16, 26, xv. 26, xvi. 15, and *passim*.

the fact that through baptism a man became a member of the Christian community. But it is perhaps more probable that the triple formula was not used in the apostolic Church, and that it was not used because the apostles did not understand that in speaking these words Jesus was prescribing anything of the nature of a fixed ritual formulary. When Harnack says that the Trinitarian formula had not the authority which we should expect, he seems to be manufacturing the very difficulty which he employs as an objection to the genuineness of the verse. What right has he to assume that those who heard these words would understand them to be meant as an authoritative liturgical rubric? A suggestion of Professor Bruce's at this point is worthy of consideration. The disciples, he says, did not feel themselves bound to the formula, if in baptizing they expressed what was necessarily implied in becoming a Christian. And he reminds us that when they asked Jesus to teach them to pray, He gave them that wonderful prayer which has passed into all Christian liturgies; and yet we never hear of that prayer again in the New Testament.[1] This surely does not prove that the Lord's Prayer was not spoken by Jesus. It only proves that the age of the apostles was an age of freedom from forms. When we come to the *Didaché*, however, we find Christians enjoined to repeat the Lord's Prayer three times every day.[2] And similarly, while the *Didaché* describes Christian baptism, precisely as the Book of Acts does, as "baptism into the name of the Lord,"[3] in its liturgical directions for the performance of the rite it prescribes the use of the Trinitarian formula.[4] So we have the analogies of a form of prayer and a formula of baptism, both given by Jesus, both living in the mind of the Church, both coming by and by into liturgical use, but of the employment of either of which in the

[1] *Kingdom of God*, p. 260.
[2] viii. 2, 3. [3] ix. 5. [4] vii. 1.

apostolic age as fixed rubrics we find no trace in the New Testament.

I have referred to difficulties that are left unsolved if we decline to accept the triple formula as coming to us from the lips of Jesus. The chief difficulty lies in the need for an adequate explanation of the Trinitarian elements that are found in the New Testament, and especially in the Pauline Epistles.[1] Weizsäcker, Harnack, and others tell us that the Trinitarianism of Matt. xxviii. 19 is sufficiently explained by the apostolic benediction at the end of 2 Cor. (xiii. 14). But is it not rather more reasonable to look the other way about, and to explain Paul's language by Christ's words?[2] Why, except on the ground of a purely *a priori* anti-supernaturalism, should it be thought a thing impossible that Jesus rose from the dead according to the Scriptures, and met with His disciples, and gave them fresh revelations of His own nature and of His purposes for them and for the world? And why, except on a purely arbitrary theory as to what Jesus was capable of thinking and saying, should we give Paul the credit of an originality in this matter which we deny to his Master?

So far, I have dealt with current objections to the institution of baptism by Jesus Christ, as recorded at the end of Matthew's Gospel. These objections, I have endeavoured to show, are by no means of an insuperable kind. And now we must remember that over-against all such objections we have to set a great positive fact of so weighty a kind, that it leads even a writer like Keim, as we have seen, to confess himself shut up to the belief that the

[1] Many of the phenomena in Paul's Epistles, Dr. Sanday points out, fall readily into place, on the assumption that Jesus Himself gave utterance to these significant words, while on any other assumption they become exceedingly intractable (Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, ii. 214; cf. Dr. Swete, *Expositor*, Oct. 1902, p. 254).

[2] Cf. Zahn, *Einleitung in das NT.* ii. 309 f.

institution of baptism comes to us from the lips of Christ Himself. This fact is, that from the very first days baptism appears to have been the universal practice of the Christian community, and even Paul, with all his originality and independence and tendency towards the most spiritual interpretations of the Christian gospel, seems never for a moment to have doubted or questioned the necessity of employing it as the rite of initiation into the Christian Church. Elaborate attempts have been made to explain the genetic history of Christian baptism apart from any institution by Jesus Christ, through the operation of such causes as the influence upon the minds of the disciples of the baptism of Jesus Himself in the Jordan, the proselyte baptism of the Jewish Church, and the mystery rites of the pagan cults.[1] But it is impossible to conceive how, within the brief space of years between the death of Jesus and Paul's earliest references to baptism, the Christian sacrament should not only have originated in such ways as these, but have spread itself universally, and established its authority both for Jews and Gentiles in a manner so absolute.[2] And it is hardly credible that if Christian baptism was a thing of later growth, not the slightest trace should be found of any controversy on the subject at the time of its introduction, and, indeed, no sign should be forthcoming of there ever having been a time or place in the primitive Church in which baptism was not regarded as authoritative. I have referred more than once to Harnack's

[1] See Teichmann, *op. cit.*, p. 369 ff.

[2] Kremer, a Dutch theologian, tries to make out that it was only Gentiles who were baptized by Paul; but his arguments are riddled by Teichmann (*op. cit.*, p. 367 ff.). But Teichmann, on his own evolutionary theory of the origin of Christian baptism, is driven to make the exceedingly fanciful assumption that, while in the very first days of the Church it was only Gentile believers who had to be baptized, after the analogy of the proselyte baptism by which they had formerly been admitted to the Jewish community, in mixed Churches, like the Pauline, the Jews allowed themselves to be baptized for the sake of uniformity! This illustrates the shifts which such theories render necessary whenever the attempt is made to work them out.

assertion, that in the apostolic age the Trinitarian formula lacks the authority which it must have had if it had descended from Jesus Himself. That assertion, we have seen, is open to question in various ways. But this, at all events, is certain, that the ordinance of baptism was possessed in early apostolic times of an extraordinary authority; and no critic has told us how we are to account for the origin of this authority, if we reject the statement of the First Gospel, that the command to administer the rite came from the lips of Jesus Christ. In the world in which we live, authority, as a rule, is much more easily lost than gained. And even if we were to grant that the Trinitarian formula has not from the first the authority we might expect, it would certainly be a much simpler thing to account, on the traditional view, for the lack of authority in the case of the formula, than to explain, on Harnack's view, the acquisition of an authority so absolute on the part of the rite itself. For all those who deny the genuineness of the statement in Matthew's Gospel, and refuse to accept baptism as a positive institution of the Lord Jesus Christ, there ever remains the problem of showing how baptism came to occupy that position in the apostolic Church which meets us in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the writings especially of St. Paul.

II. We start, then, from the position that baptism was instituted by Jesus Christ. But even so, our study of the rite must begin at an earlier stage. When Jesus told His disciples to go forth baptizing, He evidently presumed a knowledge on their part of what baptizing was. He did not explain the term, because He did not need to explain it. The word *βαπτίζω* had already become historically fixed in a clear and definite meaning. The disciples could not fail to connect Christ's use of it with uses with which they were thoroughly familiar. And we also, if we are to understand the term as we find it on the lips of Jesus,

must go back to certain earlier rites in which the historical roots of Christian baptism are to be discovered.

In the days that preceded the commencement of our Lord's public ministry, the whole land had resounded with a summons to baptism uttered by that great prophet who, because of the prominence which he gave in all his work to this particular rite, was known as John the Baptist. The baptism which Jesus appointed must certainly be interpreted in the light of the baptism of John. It was so that the disciples themselves would inevitably interpret it. Remember that it was from the circle of John's disciples that Jesus drew His first followers, and that Jesus Himself was baptized in the Jordan at John's hands, and almost certainly in the presence of some of those very men to whom the baptismal commission was given. Remember further that, as we learn from John's Gospel, Jesus allowed His disciples in the first stage of His ministry to carry on a work of baptizing on similar lines to those of His forerunner, so that He was even reported to be making and baptizing more disciples than John (John iii. 22, iv. 1, 2). As we keep all this in view, it is evident that when the disciples were told after the resurrection to go forth disciple-making and baptizing, they could not fail to understand this command in the light of that earlier baptism with which John had made them acquainted on the banks of the Jordan, and which they themselves had practised for a time.

But when we go back to John's baptism in search of light upon the baptism of Christ, we find that this earlier baptism also has its roots in a remoter past, and can only be understood through a consideration of institutions and ideas with which Israel was already well acquainted at the time when John began his ministry of reformation. No doubt John gave to baptism a depth of meaning it had never had before; and yet it is plain that under his

baptismal doctrine he subsumed ideas which were already present in the minds of those who heard him. Three moments, in particular, in the earlier history of the religion of Israel combine to explain to us the baptism of John as it meets us in the Gospels: (1) The theocratic washings of the Jews; (2) the utterances of the prophets regarding the great Messianic lustration; (3) the proselyte baptism of the later Jewish Church.[1]

1. The importance attached to the "divers washings" of the ceremonial law is familiar to every reader of the Old Testament. Not only was it the duty of the priests to wash themselves in preparation for their functions in the sanctuary, but the people also had to perform certain lustrations upon various sorts of occasions, washings not only of the person, but of garments and utensils.[2] Sometimes the religious character of these washings stands clearly in the foreground; at other times they appear to serve the purpose rather of sanitary prescriptions, or of ceremonial ordinances designed to emphasise the social separation of the Jew from surrounding peoples. But there can be no doubt that underlying them all there was a definite religious purpose. This is made plain by their association with the sacrificial cultus, and also by the fact that both in the Septuagint and the Greek New Testament they are constantly designated by the term *καθαρισμοί*, which has a distinct religious connotation.[3] Now the historical connection between John's baptism and these

[1] There is very little ground for the idea, which some have entertained, that John's baptism was genetically connected with the purifications of the Essenes. Nor is there the slightest reason to suppose that John had been influenced by the Pagan Mysteries with their rites of purgation, great as was the influence from that quarter upon the subsequent history of Christian baptism itself.

[2] See Lev. xi.–xv.; Num. xix.

[3] Cf. Lev. xiv. 32, xv. 13; Mark i. 44; Luke ii. 22, v. 14; John ii. 6. See Cremer's *Biblico-Theological Lexicon*, *s.vv.* *καθαρίζω* and *καθαρισμός*, for proof that these words are used in a religious sense, as pointing to a purification from sin.

old Jewish lustrations is proved by the history of the very word *βαπτίζω*, from which John derived his title of *ὁ βαπτιστής*. For the Hebrew word רָחַץ, which is used to describe the theocratic washings of the Jews, and which in the Septuagint is translated by *λούεσθαι*, has come in New Testament times to be rendered by *βαπτίζειν*.[1] *βαπτίζειν*, in fact, is the regular technical term alike for the ceremonial washings of the Jewish law and the Messianic baptism of John.

It is in the Levitical washings then, most assuredly, that John's baptism finds its earliest historical connections. But just as certainly it does not find its full explanation there. There were many respects in which it differed from those old lustrations. They were acts constantly repeated; his was a single act performed once for all. They were nearly always performed by each individual for himself; but John baptized with his own hands every one who came to him. Their purpose was, by removing a ceremonial defilement, to restore a man to his normal position within the ranks of the Jewish community; John's baptism, on the other hand, aimed at transferring those who submitted to it into an altogether new sphere—the sphere of definite preparation for the approaching kingdom of God.[2] But above all, the difference lay in this, that John's baptism could never be regarded as a mere ceremony; it was always vibrant through and through with ethical meaning. A cleansing of the heart from sin was not only its preliminary condition, but its constant aim and purpose. And by the searching and incisive preaching with which he accompanied it, John kept it from sinking, as it would otherwise have tended to do, to the level of a mere *opus operatum*. Witness the stern language with which he

[1] See Matt. vii. 4; Luke xi. 38; cf. Heb. ix. 10. The subject is carefully treated by Althaus, *Die Heilsbedeutung der Taufe*, p. 4 ff.

[2] See Plummer in *Dictionary of the Bible*, i. 240.

received the Pharisees when they sought his baptism. Witness the fact that he demanded repentance of all who desired to submit to the rite, and that they were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins (Matt. iii. 1–12).

2. There are thus many elements in John's baptism which the theocratic washings taken by themselves fail to explain. But a further explanation comes when we pass to the second historical moment which has been mentioned, the great Messianic lustration predicted by the prophets. For as the prophets had a new vision of what was meant by sacrifice, they had also a new view of the truth about lustration. They saw that in itself the mere outward rite could have no spiritual value. In the case of sacrifice it was not merely the external offering that God looked at, but the heart of the man who brought it. Nay, more than that, it was not the disposition with which the dumb brutes were laid upon the altar, but the simple sacrifices of a broken and a contrite heart (Ps. li. 17), the oblation of the will itself (Ps. xl. 8), that found fullest acceptance with Jehovah. Above all, it was the vicarious sacrifice of self-forgetful love that wrought atonement for the sinful, and brought peace and healing by its stripes and wounds (Isa. liii.).[1] And as with sacrifice, so also with lustration. The bathings of the person, the washing of garments, the rinsing of utensils,—all these things in themselves were utterly insufficient to make a man clean in the sight of God. "Purge me with hyssop," one had cried of old, as he realised this and lifted up his eyes in self-despair to God, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Ps. li. 7). And to one and another of the prophets the vision had come of a great lustration which the Lord would bestow on

[1] See a fine and suggestive passage on the true idea of vicarious sacrifice in the Old Testament, in Professor G. A. Smith's *Modern Criticism and the Teaching of the O.T.*, p. 170 ff.

Israel in the Messianic days, when a fountain should be opened for sin and for uncleanness, and the cleansing provided should be the cleansing and renewal of the heart.[1]

Now John came in the line of the prophets. He was himself a prophet—the greatest of all the prophets, according to Christ's own testimony; and all the hopes and visions of his predecessors concerning the Messiah and the Messianic kingdom came to life again within his great prophetic soul. Moreover, he came as the immediate herald of the Messiah's advent. How the secret was revealed to him we cannot tell; but he knew and was sure that the long-expected deliverer was about to appear, that the kingdom of heaven was now at hand. This was the ground-tone of his preaching, as it was the note by which he had especially thrilled the whole land. And the baptism to which he summoned the people was an anticipation of the Messiah's coming and a promise of the Messiah's cleansing. First of all, it had the aspect of anticipation; it was a baptism of preparation for the coming of the King, a baptism consequently which implied repentance and confession on the part of sinful men. But even more than a baptism of preparation, it was a baptism of promise. Men stained with sin must indeed repent and purge their hearts in anticipation of Him who was coming with His winnowing-fan and His baptism of fire; but for the true and perfect lustration they must wait until Messias Himself should appear, He who was not only the King in His glory, but "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." And so in its relation to the coming Christ, John's baptism was a promissory symbol, a symbol of that spiritual baptism which Christ Himself was to bestow. Hence we read both in Mark and Luke that John preached the baptism not of repentance

[1] See Jer. xxxiii. 8; Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26; Zech. xiii. 1.

only, but of repentance unto remission of sins (Mark i. 4; Luke iii. 3). The preposition εἰς shows plainly that the remission of sins was not actually bestowed by means of the baptism which John dispensed. But, as administered by him, the rite looked forward, at all events, to this great blessing. It symbolised it, and promised it, and guaranteed it to faithful hearts. And so John said expressly, as he pointed to the contrast between himself and the Coming One, between the symbol and the reality, "I indeed baptize you with water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" (Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; cf. John i. 33).

3. But there is still another moment which must be kept in view in any effort to throw light upon the historical roots of John's baptism—the proselyte baptism, namely, of the Jewish Church. Until comparatively recent times, it was held by most New Testament scholars that proselyte baptism had no existence in the days of John the Baptist, and indeed did not originate till after the fall of Jerusalem, when it was supposed to have been adopted as a rite of initiation for Gentiles into the Jewish Church, in place of the temple sacrifices, which had now passed away with the destruction of the temple itself.[1] In more recent years, however, the researches especially of Schürer and Edersheim have led to an entire change of opinion on this point; and it is now generally admitted that proselyte baptism must have been the rule in Israel long before the time of John, and indeed from the very earliest days of Jewish propagandism.[2] Now John's baptism has certain clear points

[1] The argument on this side of the case rested mainly on the silence as to proselyte baptism, not only of the O.T., the Apocrypha, and the N.T., but also of secular authors like Josephus and Philo, and such early Christian writers as Barnabas and Justin Martyr. See Plummer in *Dictionary of the Bible*, i. 239.

[2] The argument against this view derived from the silence of so many writers is very precarious. Schürer points out that the authors on whose silence most stress has been laid had really no occasion to mention the matter at all (*History of the Jewish People*, II. ii. 323). And against their silence,

of contact with the baptism of the "proselyte of righteousness," and the latter helps us to understand, in some of its aspects, that baptism of repentance which John both practised and preached. There was a subtle danger connected even with the proclamation that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and with the promise of a great Messianic lustration through baptism with the Holy Ghost. The danger lay in the fact that every Israelite was apt to assume as a matter of course that he, being a child of Abraham, was entitled on that ground alone to all the blessings of the Messianic age; and so the glowing visions and promises of the seers of Israel, which were meant for the idealised nation, were calmly appropriated as the inalienable birthright of each individual Jew. Against such a notion, John's baptism, with its accompanying personal demands, was a solemn protest. In language which almost anticipates Paul's "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly," with its clear-cut discrimination between the false circumcision and the true, he said to the Pharisees and Sadducees, of all men, when he saw them coming to his baptism, "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Matt. iii. 9). The Jews had expected the Messiah to come in judgment as well as in glory and grace; but they took for granted that the judgment would fall altogether upon Israel's enemies. Not so, said John;

which is thus easily explained, we have to set two very weighty considerations: (1) The certainty that, from the ceremonial point of view, every Gentile was unclean; from which it follows that he could not be received into the full privileges of the Jewish community without being cleansed in the way appointed by the Levitical law (Schürer, *ut sup.*, p. 322; Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, ii. 747; Krauss, *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, ii. 499). (2) The extreme unlikelihood that after the year 70 A.D., when the cleavage between the synagogue and the Church had become complete, the rabbis would adopt for the first time the very rite which had long been recognised as the specific ceremony of initiation into the Christian community.

Christ comes indeed in judgment, laying the axe to the root of the tree, holding the winnowing-fan in His hand, burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire; but Israel's chaff and Israel's fruitless trees must not hope to be spared. And so, reading their secret hearts like an open book, John said to the very men who regarded themselves as the true *élite* of God's chosen nation, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matt. iii. 7).

John met those who came to his baptism, as the "proselyte of righteousness" was met when he sought to pass from the gates of Judaism into the sanctuary itself, with certain rigorous demands. The proselyte had to renounce his past, to renounce it so utterly that when he stepped out of the waters of baptism he was regarded, in the common language of the rabbis, as being "born again," or as being as "a little child just born."[1] And John, standing by the Jordan, met Israel with similar demands. "You need not trust in your descent from Abraham," he cried, "as if that entitled you to number yourselves among the heirs of the kingdom of heaven. You must draw near like strangers and proselytes, humbly seeking admission into the sphere of the Messianic preparation by an utter renunciation of the past." John sought, we might put it, to make men by his baptism "proselytes of righteousness" in a new and higher order. He came, as Jesus once said, "in the way of righteousness"; and the righteousness he wished men to possess was a purer, loftier righteousness than that of the full-fledged proselyte of Israel. It did not consist in mere obedience to the law of a carnal commandment, but in repentance towards God and deliberate self-consecration to His kingdom. And so even Jesus could say, when He came to John to be baptized, "Thus it becometh us

[1] Edersheim, *op. cit.*, ii. 746.

to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt. iii. 15). Jesus Himself was absolutely righteous; He had no sins to repent of or confess; but He knew that John was a prophet sent of God, sent to inaugurate that kingdom of God of which righteousness is a fundamental note. And as John came to prepare the way for the kingdom of righteousness, Jesus could consecrate Himself to the work of that kingdom by seeking John's baptism; and could feel in so doing that He was taking the first step in that long upward path which led Him on by the way of the wilderness and the garden and the cross, until all righteousness had been perfectly fulfilled.[1]

I have entered thus fully into the subject of John's baptism, its historical connections, and its meaning on the lips of the Baptist himself, because, as I have said, we certainly find here a very large part of that circle of ideas with which Jesus assumed His disciples to be familiar when He gave them the baptismal command. But now we have to notice another of the immediate historical presuppositions—that work of baptism, namely, of which the fourth evangelist tells us, which was carried on for a time, not indeed by Christ Himself, but by His disciples, though evidently with His full knowledge and sanction (John iii. 22–26, iv. 1, 2).[2] The attempt has sometimes been made to regard this early baptism of which John's Gospel informs us as having continued all through Christ's ministry, and as being practically identical with the baptism of which we read at the end of Matthew.[3] This, however, is a view which rests upon very insufficient foundations.

[1] On the meaning of our Lord's baptism, cf. Edersheim, *op. cit.*, i. 279 ff.; Dr. D. W. Forrest, *Expository Times*, xi. 354.

[2] Possibly our Lord's reason for not personally baptizing lay in the purpose to emphasise the distinction between the baptism with water and the baptism with the Holy Ghost (cf. Matt. iii. 2; Mark i. 8; John i. 33; Acts i. 5).

[3] So Meyer in his remarks on Matt. xxviii. 19. The only difference he recognises is that after the resurrection baptism was extended so as to apply to all nations.

The baptismal work in Judæa of which John tells us must rather be set alongside of that call to repentance and proclamation that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, with which, according to Mark and Matthew, Jesus began His ministry in Galilee (Mark i. 15; Matt. iv. 17). In both cases He was associating Himself for a time with the work of His forerunner. But just as the note of mere preparation soon passed out of the preaching, so, it would seem, this baptism of preparation which Jesus allowed His disciples to continue was soon abandoned also. If baptism had formed part of the regular methods of Christ's ministry, it is hardly possible that there should have been no mention of it in the Synoptic Gospels, especially in the instructions which the Lord gave to the Twelve, and afterwards to the Seventy, when He sent them forth in His name (Mark vi. 7 ff.; Luke x. 1). But such a thing is never hinted at. We can hardly do other than infer that the baptism which John records was merely a passing phrase of Christ's activity, belonging only to that early period of His ministry when He attached Himself to the work of preparation that was carried on by His forerunner.

III. It is in connection with this subject of the baptism of preparation for the kingdom of God as practised by John, and at an early stage by the disciples of Jesus also, that the well-known passage in the third chapter of John's Gospel most naturally comes up for consideration. Here as elsewhere, in dealing with the Johannine account of our Lord's discourses, we have to choose between two opposite views. Either we have in these discourses a correct representation by the evangelist of our Lord's words, if not as to their precise form, at all events as to their meaning and substance, or else we have at best an idealising treatment of them in which the author blends with the original tradition something of his own individual views, and something also of the conceptions of the com-

munity for which he wrote. As has been indicated in the previous lecture, we prefer to abide by the traditional view of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel, and also to accept the witness of the original Johannine circle when they say of the evangelist, "We know that his testimony is true" (John xxi. 24).

With regard to this particular passage, Wendt makes an interesting suggestion on the lines of his special theory that in the Fourth Gospel we have a genuine Johannine source worked over by a later redactor. In view of the difficulty created by the reference to water in the 5th verse, while throughout the rest of the passage it is the Spirit alone who appears as the regenerating power, he suggests that in the original record of the incident there was no mention of a birth through water, but that this manifest reference to baptism was inserted by the *redactor*.[1] This cuts the Gordian knot effectually enough, and explains at once the curious fact, which it is so difficult to account for on any High Church theory of baptism, that the water, though referred to in the 5th verse, thereafter finds no place alongside of the Spirit in what is said about the new birth (vers. 6 and 8), while faith is set forth again and again as the one condition of obtaining eternal life (vers. 15, 16, 18). This solution, however, though beautifully simple and natural from the point of view of Wendt's theory, has really no textual basis to rest upon, and must therefore be described as a purely arbitrary way of escaping from the exegetical and doctrinal difficulties of the passage. But if we decline to be carried away by arbitrary methods of criticism, however tempting in their seeming simplicity, we must just as little allow ourselves to be imposed upon by arbitrary methods of exegesis. If we regard the words about the birth of water and the Spirit as coming to us from the historical Jesus, we must see that they are inter-

[1] See his *Teaching of Jesus*, ii. 91, and *Gospel of John*, p. 120.

preted in the light of the historical situation. Now it is surely not without meaning in this connection that John, who has given us already a particularly full narrative of the ministry of the Baptist, immediately follows up his account of the Nicodemus episode by telling us how Jesus and His disciples took up and carried on John's baptism of preparation (iii. 22–26, iv. 1, 2). This shows that it is in the light of the baptism of John that this episode must be read, and that it is a purely artificial construction to see in it a reference on the part of our Lord to the future sacrament of the Christian Church.

When Nicodemus came to Jesus, he came not simply as an individual, but as the representative of a class, as "a man of the Pharisees" and "a ruler of the Jews." His very first words, "We know that Thou art a teacher come from God," show that he was speaking not only for himself but for others. It is evident from all the Gospel narratives that the Pharisees were greatly exercised at the time concerning Jesus, who and what He was; and that their concern was largely due to the preparatory ministry and testimony of John. And Nicodemus certainly came to inquire about the expected kingdom of God of which Jesus had been preaching. That plainly underlies his opening words, and it is implied also in the answer which Jesus gave, "Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God."[1] Now the phrase "born anew" is so far explained by proselyte baptism, with the ideas and language to which it gave rise; but it must also be taken with special reference to the baptism of John, which, as we have seen, had now subsumed the ideas suggested

[1] That ἄνωθεν in ver. 3 must be taken in the temporal and not in the local sense, *i.e.* as meaning "anew" and not "from above," is shown by the whole context. Nicodemus so understood it, and was not contradicted by Jesus (cf. vers. 4 and 6). And in ver. 12 what Jesus has said about the spiritual birth is described as belonging to τὰ ἐπίγεια, as distinguished from τὰ ἐπουράνια. Cf. Cremer, *Die Paulinische Rechtfertigungslehre*, p. 269.

by the baptism of the proselyte under the new category of a baptism of preparation for the Messiah's kingdom. The Pharisees as a class had refused to submit to John's baptism. Luke tells us expressly that while the people and the publicans "justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John," "the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of him" (Luke vii. 29, 30). And the reasons for this refusal to submit to John's baptism are made clear enough in Matthew's narrative (Matt. iii. 7–12). When the Pharisees came to the Jordan, John met them with high and stern demands for repentance, a visible repentance manifesting itself in appropriate fruits. And he went on to show his clear insight into the grounds of their reluctance to yield to these demands, when he warned them not to say within themselves, "We have Abraham to our father." To those proud, self-righteous Jewish formalists it seemed a thing incredible that the sons of Abraham, before being fit for the Messianic kingdom, should be called upon to submit, like any Gentile proselyte or Jewish publican, to a process of being "born anew." And it is this same Pharisaic resentment of the demand for an ethical preparation, this same positive inability to see its application to men like himself, that breathes through the answer of Nicodemus: "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Whether Nicodemus was speaking confusedly, as some have thought, "not knowing what he said," like Peter on the Mount of Transfiguration, or whether there is not rather a certain intention of irony at the idea of this demand for a new birth in such a case as his own, at all events Jesus followed up His first answer by saying more explicitly, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (ver. 5).

Now, if anything is clear in the whole of this difficult passage, it is that these words are meant to be explanatory of what has been already said in ver. 3. By the use of the specific expressions "water" and "Spirit," Jesus desires to make perfectly plain to His perplexed or unwilling hearer what has been already said in the earlier verse. And when at ver. 10 He looks back on His own utterances and asks, "Art thou the teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things?" He undoubtedly implies that the things of which He has spoken are things which this Pharisee ought to have understood. How strange, then, on the part of any who regard John's narrative as genuinely historical, to make the words of Jesus about the birth of water and the Spirit the fundamental description of the inherent qualities of the sacrament of Christian baptism, a subject of which Nicodemus could not possibly have the slightest conception.[1] Calvin is sometimes treated rather contemptuously by Catholicising writers for regarding ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος as a hendiadys, analogous to "with the Holy Ghost and fire" in Matthew's Gospel (iii. 11).[2] And most probably Calvin was mistaken here. For, unlike the expression in Matthew, the present one appears on a background in which the two associated terms find their natural explanation in two distinct concrete historical facts, the baptism of John, namely, and John's proclamation of the Messianic baptism of the Holy Ghost, by which his own was to be transcended. But the

[1] It is sometimes argued that the use of the indefinite τις in vers. 3 and 5 implies that our Lord was laying down the universal conditions of salvation; and that therefore His reference must have been to the future sacrament of the Catholic Church. But nothing is more common, whether in Greek or in any other language, than to use an indefinite pronoun in a sense which is limited by the speaker's audience and circumstances. And it would be very strange if τις was meant to refer to the conditions of salvation for men in general at a future time, while it excluded for the present Nicodemus himself, this particular inquirer after the way of salvation, by setting before him, as the condition of a new birth, a sacrament that as yet had no existence.

[2] See *Institutes*, iv. 16, § 25.

curious thing is that some of the very writers who ridicule Calvin's hendiadys immediately make use of a hendiadys of a much more violent kind, for they treat the two contrasted moments of John's baptism with water and Christ's baptism with the Holy Ghost as if they were simply equivalent to the sacrament of Christian baptism. Calvin's view, as we have said, does not do full justice to the historical background; but this view violates every element of the historical situation in the most arbitrary fashion, by making Jesus discourse to a Pharisee about a sacrament of which, so far as we are aware, He did not speak to His own disciples until after His resurrection, and do so, moreover, on the express assumption that the Pharisee ought to have known perfectly well what was meant!

Now it is true, as commentators have frequently pointed out, that the absence of the article before both ὕδατος and πνεύματος indicates that the words should be taken generically. Our Lord's utterance here is not limited to one definite institution, least of all to an institution that as yet did not exist. Water is the natural symbol of spiritual cleansing, and Spirit the only possible principle of a new life. Still, this generic use of the words does not in the least preclude their having a particular application, if that application was one which the hearer would naturally and almost inevitably be led to make. The mention of a birth by water could not fail to suggest to Nicodemus the baptism of John, that baptism of which the whole land had been speaking, but which the Pharisees as a class had rejected for themselves. And when Jesus said to this man of the Pharisees, "Except a man be born of water," He was speaking of the necessity, even for such persons as Nicodemus himself, of that baptism of repentance with its renunciation of the past, by which, John had said, men must prepare themselves for the kingdom of God. We must remember that John's baptism

was no arbitrary expedient of his own devising, but an ordinance which he had been divinely inspired to employ. When he began that great baptismal ministry, he did so with the full consciousness of a heavenly call. He believed, as he proclaimed, that God had "sent him to baptize with water" (John i. 33). And Jesus abundantly ratified John's claim. He ratified it when He came to Bethany beyond Jordan to be Himself baptized, and when He said to His forerunner, who hesitated to administer the rite to such an applicant, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt. iii. 15). He ratified it afterwards when He declared that John the Baptist "came in the way of righteousness"; and when He gave as the reason why the publicans and harlots went into the kingdom of God before the chief priests and the elders of the people, that the publicans and harlots believed John, while the priests and elders believed him not (Matt. xxi. 32). And once again He set His seal to it when He asked the Pharisees that question which they found it so awkward to answer, "The baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men?" (Mark xi. 30). And to the testimony which both John himself and Jesus gave as to the divine obligation of this baptism of repentance, we have to add the testimony of an evangelist; for Luke tells us, in words which I have already quoted, that the Pharisees and lawyers, by refusing John's baptism, had "rejected for themselves the counsel of God."[1]

This, then, was the first way in which Nicodemus and his fellows must seek that new birth which was the condition of entrance into the kingdom of God. They must not reject the counsel of God any longer, they must not harden their hearts in Pharisaic pride; but must come

[1] These words are sometimes regarded as the words of Jesus, but there can be little doubt that they are a historical reflection of the evangelist. Cf. Bruce, *Expositor's Greek Testament, in loco.*

humbly and penitently to that baptism of repentance which they in fact especially needed, and which was for them the divinely appointed way of preparing for the kingdom that was about to appear. But that was not all. The baptism of repentance, as the symbol of a dying to the past, was only the negative side of the new birth; and Nicodemus himself, as the teacher of Israel, knew, or ought to have known, as much. The prophets of Israel had testified that a new heart and a new spirit were to be the results of the bestowal of the Spirit of God (Ezek. xxxvi. 25–27); and John had assured his hearers most emphatically that his baptism was only a baptism with water, while He that came after should baptize them with the Holy Ghost. He had said this to the deputation from that very Sanhedrin of which Nicodemus was a member, and had even indicated Jesus as the Coming One from whose hands this spiritual gift should proceed (John i. 19–34). But what did John mean by the phrase "to baptize with the Holy Ghost"? High Churchmen constantly assume that on the lips of the Baptist these words mean nothing else than baptizing with water in the power of the Holy Ghost; in other words, that they are equivalent to Christian baptism in the ritualistic conception of its mysterious efficacy.[1] But there is absolutely no ground for supposing that John was contrasting water baptism *minus* the Spirit with water baptism *plus* the Spirit; the contrast he draws is between his own baptism with water on the one hand, and Christ's baptism with the Holy Ghost on the other.[2] To make

[1] See, *e.g.*, Althaus, *Heilsbedeutung der Taufe*, p. 12 f.; Rackham, *Acts*, p. 30.

[2] It is plainly a very large assumption to conclude that while "baptizing with water" simply means baptizing with water, "baptizing with the Holy Ghost" does not simply mean baptizing with the Holy Ghost, but baptizing with water in the power of the Holy Ghost. This is to assume that βαπτίζω necessarily connotes the idea of water baptism, whether ἐν ὕδατι is added or not. But the use of the word in the New Testament shows that this is not the case. When Jesus said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished"

the assumption of these writers is not only to treat John's language unexegetically, by constructing the synthesis "water baptism in the power of the Spirit" out of his antithesis between the baptism of water and the baptism of the Spirit, but it is to presuppose that John, who, according to our Lord Himself, was less than the least in the kingdom of heaven, possessed a definite foreknowledge of the institutions of the Christian Church; and it is further to presuppose that John by anticipation was a High Churchman.

When John spoke of baptizing with the Holy Ghost, it is hardly possible to suppose that he was referring to a future sacrament of the Christian Church. And when Jesus spoke to Nicodemus of the baptism of water and the Spirit, it is exceedingly unlikely, to say the least, that He was referring any more than John had done to the subsequent Christian institution. By the mention of water He impressed upon His hearer the need of repentance, and of that definite and open repentance which was implied in John's baptism; and by dwelling upon the baptism of the Spirit He reminded him of the further need for the gift of life itself, a need of which John also had spoken, but for which he had pointed away from himself to the coming Messiah. To the negative cleansing symbolised by water there must be added the positive life that comes from God, that spiritual life by the inflow of which the stony heart should be taken away and the heart of flesh bestowed. "How can these things be?" Nicodemus exclaimed. And Jesus told him of a way to life which was valid there and then, long before the

(Luke xii. 50), and again, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (Mark x. 38), it is evident that the word is used figuratively. Similarly, when the forerunner announced that Christ would baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire (Matt. iii. 11), this baptism with fire certainly does not mean a baptism with water—all the more as it is set in express antithesis to the baptism of John himself.

Christian sacrament was instituted, or perhaps even thought of by Jesus, and that is valid now, apart from baptism altogether. For whosoever believeth, He said, in the Son of Man may have eternal life (ver. 15).

IV. And now, having sought to show that baptism as an institution comes to us from Jesus Christ Himself, and having spoken of those earlier baptisms which, while they are certainly insufficient to account for the origin of the Christian rite apart from our Lord's appointment, have yet a very direct bearing upon its meaning, let us examine more closely the baptismal command as we find it at the end of Matthew's Gospel (xxviii. 19). It is unnecessary to dwell upon the fact that this was a missionary commission, and that even if it was given to the Eleven alone, which, however, is doubtful in view of the statements of Luke and John (Luke xxiv. 33, 47; John xx. 19 ff.), at all events it was given to them as representative of the whole company of Christian believers that had gathered round the Lord, and of the whole Christian Ecclesia of the future.[1] Now, the essential task which Jesus here lays upon His followers is expressed in the word *μαθητεύσατε*, *i.e.* they are to make men His *μαθηταί*. But *μαθητής* is the very word which is constantly used to express the relation to Jesus of all those who during His ministry were drawn around Him in trust and teachableness, and who looked to Him as their Master. Not to go beyond the present chapter and the concluding part of the previous one, we read of Joseph of Arimathea that he "also himself was Jesus' disciple" (*ἐμαθήτευσε*); while the "also" in this verse evidently points back to the ministering women of the two preceding verses, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, and who are thus indicated as His disciples likewise. The angel of the resurrection

[1] See Westcott, *Gospel of St. John*, p. 294; Hort, *Christian Ecclesia*, p. 33 ff.

is represented as saying to the two Marys, "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead"; and they, on receiving this message, "run to bring His disciples word." Finally, the very men to whom Jesus gives the great commission to make disciples are themselves described as "the eleven *μαθηταί*." It is natural, then, to conclude that *μαθητεύειν* in the commission means to bring men into those same relations of personal trust in Jesus in which His disciples already stood, and to do so by the use of means similar to those which Jesus had been wont to employ in drawing disciples around Him, and which the apostles had already employed when Jesus sent them forth to preach the gospel throughout the villages of Galilee (Luke ix. 1–6), or when at the beginning of the ministry Andrew brought Simon to Jesus, and Philip said to Nathanael, "Come and see." Not the slightest hint is given that these spiritual methods of disciple-making, which had been used all along, were to be abandoned now. Now, as formerly, men must be drawn into the circle of discipleship by hearing the message of the gospel, and by believing it.

The *μαθητεύσατε* of the commission, accordingly, implies a previous *κήρυγμα*—an announcement of the glad tidings, and a summons to faith as the fundamental means of bringing any one into the personal relation of discipleship to Christ. We are confirmed in this conclusion by the parallel passage in the last section of Mark, as given in the Textus Receptus (xvi. 15, 16). Even if it does not furnish us with an original *logion* of Jesus, it is at all events of very early date, and reflects a primitive, perhaps an apostolic, tradition as to the nature and meaning of the Lord's commission. Now in Mark the command runs, "Go and preach the gospel," while faith in this gospel is made an indispensable condition of salvation, indeed, to judge from the second clause of ver. 16, the *one* indis-

pensable condition. Similarly at the end of Luke, in the last instructions which Jesus gives to the Eleven and those that were with them, He declares "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations" (xxiv. 33, 47). In correspondence with this, too, is the whole practice of the apostles in their subsequent ministry. It is evident that they regarded the work of evangelisation as the first step towards disciple-making, and the "hearing of faith" as the necessary preliminary to baptism. We have an illustration of what must have been their normal course of procedure when we read of Paul and Barnabas at Derbe, that "when they had preached the gospel (εὐαγγελισάμενοι), and had made many disciples (μαθητεύσαντες), they returned again to Lystra" (Acts xiv. 21). And as in this instance the making of disciples is preceded by the preaching of the gospel, so in the nature of the case it must always have been.

But we must further emphasise the fact that this μαθητεύσατε not only implies a previous preaching of the gospel, but itself denotes the forming of a direct personal relation with Jesus Christ, the relation, namely, of a μαθητής, as the fundamental act in the process of becoming a Christian. Through the influence of Ritschl and his followers, the idea has become widely diffused of recent years that the community is the primary object of God's saving grace, and the individual only as a member of the community; and hence that our relation to Christ is first realised through reception into the community; union with the Church being the first moment of salvation, and union with Christ Himself only the secondary moment.[1]

[1] See Ritschl, *Justification and Reconciliation*, p. 167; cf. his *Unterricht in der Christlichen Religion*, p. 77. Bishop Gore, and even Dr. Sanday, have attached themselves to this Ritschlian view, and have sought, each in his own way, to find in it some support for a modern reading of the old churchly claim, "*extra ecclesiam nulla salus.*" See Gore, *Body of Christ*, p. 316 ff.; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, p. 122 ff.

But the very meaning of the words μαθητεύειν and μαθητής, and the fact that all New Testament disciple-making rests essentially on evangelisation and the hearing of faith, really puts such ideas out of the question. According to the whole trend of New Testament teaching, the decisive moment of discipleship is when a man is brought through faith into personal contact with Christ. Μάθετε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, "Learn of Me" (Matt. xi. 29); that is the true way of becoming Christ's μαθητής. Personal trust in Jesus makes the man who cherishes it a Christian disciple, and he who in faith calls Jesus Lord does so by the Holy Ghost. It is out of such disciples that the Church is built, and it is because men have first become the disciples of the Lord that they are prepared to stand to one another in the mutual relations of the Christian society.[1]

But now observe the connection of baptism with disciple-making; for that it has a very close connection the present passage forbids us to doubt. We have seen already that baptism was no novel rite to the men whom Jesus was addressing. They remembered both the baptism of John and the baptism of Christ's early ministry. And so to them the rite had especially two meanings. On the one hand, it was a symbol of cleansing to the sinful; and on the other, an act of initiation into a definite sphere or fellowship. Apart from any instruction to the contrary (and there is no appearance of any such thing), baptism, for them, must still have had the same meaning. And so they would understand that when they went forth preaching repentance and remission of sins, they were to symbolise by baptism the gracious gospel of forgiveness which they proclaimed; and that when they called upon men to become the disciples of Jesus, they were to initiate by means of the ordinance those who were willing to profess their faith into that outward society of discipleship to which they

[1] See Matt. xvi. 15–18; and cf. Hort., *op. cit.*, pp. 16–17.

themselves already belonged. Baptism was the symbol of that gospel of forgiveness by which men were to be won as disciples of Christ, and it was also the act by which discipleship was outwardly consummated, through the profession of faith which it implied on the one hand, and the admission into the visible community which it proclaimed on the other.[1]

There is thus no ground to suppose, from anything that our Lord says here, that, in itself, Christian baptism meant more than was meant by the baptism of John. Rather in itself it was the very same thing, an initiatory rite with a symbolic meaning; and the difference between the two, great as it was, comes altogether from the vast difference between the two spheres of truth to which, in each case, baptism stood in the relation of a symbol, and the two circles of preparation and realisation respectively to which it admitted those who accepted it. It is very common for High Churchmen, both Lutheran and Anglican, to draw an absolute contrast between John's baptism and Christ's baptism, analogous to that which is drawn between John's preaching and the gospel of Christ, and to say that as John's preaching contained nothing more than the promise of salvation, while Christian preaching brings the immediate offer of it, so John's baptism merely symbolised grace, while Christian baptism directly conveys it. And

[1] It is a mistake to say that the grammatical relation between the two words *μαθητεύσατε* and *βαπτίζοντες* implies that baptism is the fundamental act in disciple-making, so that it was by being baptized that men were to become disciples. The construction in this case does not enable us to decide one way or the other. But when we go behind the grammar to the sense, it is evident that it would be running counter to all our Lord's teaching as to what is meant by discipleship, and as to the way in which His disciples are made, to suppose that they are made by being baptized. Disciples, therefore, were first made and then baptized. This had been the order in Christ's earliest ministry (John iv. 1), and, in default of any instruction to the contrary, His hearers must have understood it to be the order still. Besides, the very meaning of *μαθητεύω* points to a spiritual relation; and the earlier experience of the disciples would prevent them from imagining that discipleship in its essential nature was henceforth to be constituted by a ritual act.

the ground alleged for this assertion is that Christ being who and what He was, His symbols cease to be mere symbols, and, in the very nature of the case, become veritable realities. For in Him, as we read in Hebrews, all types and shadows are done away, and we come at once to the full wealth of the heavenly Jerusalem. The baptism which Christ appoints, therefore, can no longer simply shadow forth a gift, but must, as a matter of course, impart it.[1] But there is nothing in Christ's language to justify the idea that the baptism He appointed is in itself an immediate conveyance of grace. And the argument from the present realities of the Christian gospel to the necessary realism of the symbols which that gospel employs, although we continually meet with it in a certain class of writers, is nothing but a fallacy. It really amounts to saying that it is impossible for Christ to make use of symbols at all. As the touch of Midas turned everything into gold, so, on this theory, it would follow that when Jesus employed an outward symbol, that symbol was immediately transmuted into a hard though glittering fact. The fallacy lies in carrying over to the symbol what really belongs to the truth which the symbol is used to express. Christ's revelation is a revelation of final and absolute truth. From the anticipative types and shadows of the old dispensation He brings us to the present realities of the new. But it does not follow that these present realities may not still be expressed by Him in a symbolical way. Surely it is just as possible for Christ to embody His gospel in visible symbols as in spoken parables; and we are not to conclude, in the one case any more than in the other, that the symbol is thereby transformed into a necessary channel of grace operating in a miraculous manner. The truth and power of the sacrament are found

[1] See, *e.g.*, Cremer, *Taufe, Wiedergeburt, und Kindertaufe*, p. 19; Althaus, *op. cit.*, pp. 26–27; Rackham, *Acts*, p. 30.

not in erecting it into a ceremony possessed of some mysterious and magical potency, an idea that does not find the slightest support in any word of Jesus Himself, but in keeping clearly before us that profound fact of the divine forgiveness of sins to which it gives symbolic expression, and that vital union of the true disciple with Christ and His community of which it is the solemn seal.

The baptism of Christ's disciples was to be "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." By this threefold name we are not to understand the mere utterance of these words as a formula. According to familiar scriptural usage, the name of God is nothing else than the revealed character of God; and so the threefold name is just a summary of what Jesus in the course of His ministry had taught His disciples regarding the divine nature. It reminded them that God was their Father, that Christ was the Son in whom the Father is revealed, and that through the Holy Spirit God in Christ is continually present with His people, present with them all the days even unto the end of the world, as Jesus immediately proceeded to say. Baptism into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost meant, therefore, a baptism which rested upon the faith and confession that are implied in the use of this name.[1] So

[1] Sometimes support has been sought for magical theories of baptismal regeneration, in the idea that baptism into the name of the Father, etc., means a being immersed in the nature of the triune God, so as to be mystically conjoined with it. This view has been advocated by Höfling and others among the Neo-Lutherans; and Bunke says that it is widely entertained at the present time in German clerical circles (see his *Lehrstreit über die Kindertaufe*, p. 91). But according to the general usage of the New Testament, *βαπτίζειν εἰς* means no more than "to baptize with reference to," while "the particular object to which the baptism has reference is to be gathered from the context" (cf. Meyer, *in loco;* Scholten, *op. cit.*, p. 13 ff.). The baptism of the Israelites into (*εἰς*) Moses (1 Cor. x. 2) means that they thereby acknowledged Moses as their divinely-sent leader and prophet. And to baptize into the name of the Father, etc., denotes no more than the acceptance by the believer of the revelation of God in Christ.

faith remains always the essential thing. Of this we have a further confirmation in the passage at the end of Mark's Gospel. By the omission of any mention of baptism in the second clause of ver. 16, the writer suggests that if there is one absolute and indispensable condition of salvation, that condition is faith, and that the lack of baptism does not exclude from blessedness, if only faith is not wanting.

To sum up, then, it may be said that Jesus instituted His baptism as a symbol of His gospel of forgiveness, and a sign of the common Christian discipleship of all those who should be willing to accept the truth of the Christian revelation, and personally to commit themselves to Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. He did not explain the meaning of the rite to the men to whom He gave it, because He did not need to explain it. They were familiar with the baptism of John and the parallel baptism of the earliest ministry of their Master, and when Jesus spoke of baptizing, they knew that this was a symbol of cleansing on the one hand, and a profession of discipleship on the other. Its importance for them lay not in any mysterious virtue inherent in it, of which Jesus said nothing, but in its suggestiveness as a symbol and its significance as an initiatory rite, coupled with the fact that their Lord Himself had appointed it to be used for these purposes. In this connection it is worth noticing that there is no ground for supposing that this rite of Christian baptism, as instituted by Jesus, was ever administered to the members of the original community themselves. Their discipleship to Christ was sufficiently obvious without being attested in this formal manner, and their cohesion as a community was adequately secured while they were still a little flock with their Lord Himself in the midst. It was only after He had left the world that the institution came into use. It then supplied a

means of profession for those who could no longer profess their faith, like the original disciples, by attaching themselves to the earthly Jesus, and a bond of union and fellowship for those who belonged to a visible society destined to spread out into all the world.

LECTURE III.

Baptism: The General Apostolic Practice and Doctrine.

In the preceding lecture we were concerned with the institution of baptism by Jesus, its historical connections in the past, and the significance which our Lord appears to have attached to it, as that is suggested by the words He used and the interpretations that would naturally be put upon those words by the men who first heard them. We now pass to a consideration of the New Testament evidence as to the practice and doctrine of baptism in the apostolic Church. We shall find it convenient, however, on account both of its individuality and its bulk, to treat the Pauline material separately from the rest, and also to treat it last. It is true, no doubt, that, with one possible exception, the Epistle of James, Paul's Epistles are the earliest in point of time of all the New Testament writings. But we must remember that the chronological order in which our documents were written is not necessarily the logical order of doctrinal treatment.[1] A book like 1 Peter, for example, which is probably later than any of Paul's Epistles, is more primitive in its whole outlook than anything that comes from the pen of the apostle of the Gentiles. And as for Acts, it would be almost as foolish to postpone a consideration of its evidence upon such a subject as baptism until we had studied the baptismal doctrine of the Pauline writings, as it would be to begin

[1] Cf. Beyschlag, *N. T. Theology*, i. 21.

a study of the teaching of Jesus by turning to Paul instead of to the Gospels. For the earliest history of the Church we have no other historical source than the Book of Acts, and even Paul's Epistles themselves would often be enigmas to us but for the illumination that falls upon them from the pages of the first of all the historians of the Church.[1] In the present lecture, accordingly, we shall deal with what may be called the general apostolic view of baptism, as that is to be gathered from the relevant portions of Acts and from the other non-Pauline writings, reserving the Pauline doctrine for the following lecture. And in both of these lectures we shall confine ourselves to the problem of the essential significance of baptism, leaving for further and separate treatment all other questions that emerge as to the mode, subjects, formula, and administration of the rite.

I. In the opening chapter of Acts the historian tells us that the risen Jesus said to His disciples, "John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts i. 5). Here, then, our Lord, just as John had done before, sets the baptism of the Spirit in direct antithesis to the baptism of water. In John's case, as we have seen, it is out of the question to suppose that by the baptism with the Spirit he meant the baptismal rite of the Christian Church. And here also, on any grounds of exegesis, it seems plain that by baptism with the Holy Ghost Jesus does not mean, as is often assumed, baptism with water in the power of the Spirit, but the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the disciples. And when we pass to the second chapter of Acts, this view is justified by the actual event. For when the promised baptism was received by the apostles and other disciples to the number of one hundred and twenty, it was no

[1] Schleiermacher says, "The germs of Paul's Epistles are all to be found in the Acts of the Apostles."

baptism with water, but an effusion of a purely spiritual kind. In the account given us of what took place, water is not so much as mentioned, or even hinted at, and the very symbolism of the descent of the Spirit is derived, not from the element of water, but from the wind and the fire. With this bestowal of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, those one hundred and twenty disciples, who composed the young Church, had received the fulfilment of their Lord's words. They were now baptized with the Holy Ghost. What this implied we shall see more fully by and by; but what we have to notice in the meantime is that the first Christian disciples were never baptized in the sense of the regular Christian rite.[1] An attempt is sometimes made to obviate this fact by saying that, as they had previously received the baptism of John or the parallel baptism of Christ's disciples during the earliest Judæan ministry, they did not need to be baptized again. But we have no right to assume that all of those one hundred and twenty disciples had received one or the other of those earlier baptisms. When we remember that very soon after Christ's ministry began John was cast into prison, and that with the termination of his activity the baptism of preparation on the part of Christ's disciples appears also to have ceased, the supposition becomes exceedingly precarious. And even if there were any reason to believe that all the one hundred and twenty had received the baptism of preparation, there is not the slightest ground for saying that that baptism might stand as the equivalent of the Christian baptism now instituted by Jesus. The incident recorded in the nineteenth chapter of Acts, where certain Ephesian disciples who had previously been baptized with the baptism of John were baptized anew into the

[1] See Alford's *Greek Testament*, ii. 211. Alford admits that the apostles and other original disciples never received the Christian rite. Cf. also Meyer, *Acts*, ii. 153, 154; Weiss, *Biblical Theology of the N.T.*, i. 187; Beyschlag, *op. cit.*, i. 320.

name of the Lord Jesus, points indeed to an exactly opposite conclusion.[1]

Now this is highly important, for it gives us, from the very first days of the Church, a glimpse of the true place of baptism in the doctrine of salvation. The members of the original community were not baptized into the Church. The Church was founded simply on the rock of faith and confession (Matt. xvi. 18); and, on the ground of true and faithful discipleship to Christ, those men were endued with the Spirit. Baptism, as appointed by Christ, was to be of great significance as the ordinance of a missionary Church. It was to serve as an impressive symbol of that gospel of divine forgiveness which the Church was set to proclaim. It was to give to faith an opportunity of public confession, and to supply at the same time an organising rite of immense value, as being at once the condition and the seal of attachment to the visible company of the followers of Jesus. But it was not an essential means of salvation; it was not the fundamental thing in a man's relation to Jesus Christ. The experience of the hundred and twenty in the upper room showed that essential Christianity consisted in nothing else than union with the Lord by personal discipleship, and that those who were thus united to Him would receive His richest blessings. Thus the striking fact meets us, that, as afterwards in the house of Cornelius the first Gentile Christians received the gift of the Spirit, by which God "bare them witness," as Peter said, that their hearts were cleansed by faith, not only before they had been baptized, but before the apostle had even dreamed of baptizing them;

[1] The fact that the first members of the Christian community do not appear to have received Christian baptism, was felt to be so awkward at a later stage, when baptism had been transformed into a magical rite on which salvation depended, that the idea arose that the apostles *must* have been baptized. Hence we have the fanciful story, to which Clement of Alexandria alludes, that Jesus baptized Peter, Peter baptized Andrew and John, while they in turn baptized the rest. See Anrich, *Das antike Mysterienwesen*, p. 119. Cf. Stanley, *Christian Institutions*, p. 17.

so here the first Jewish Christians, in that little community at Jerusalem which was to be the mother of us all, did not receive any baptismal rite whatsoever. And we are not to think that this was inconsistent with the great commission of the last chapter of Matthew. For that commission to make disciples, baptizing them, was given to men who were disciples already. They did not need to have their discipleship recognised by means of a rite, for it had already been recognised in a more direct way by the personal choice of their Master and their close companionship with Him and with one another. If, indeed, baptism were the means of salvation, it is difficult to see how or why the first members of the Christian Church should have been allowed to dispense with it. But if, on the other hand, it was a rite given by the Lord for the purpose of aiding His disciples in the proclamation of the gospel and the organisation of His community, it is easy to perceive why it might be unnecessary for the original disciples whom Jesus had gathered around Him, while of unspeakable value for the work which He gave them to do after His visible presence was taken away.

We pass now to that passage towards the end of the second chapter of Acts, which is of so great importance for our study, because in it we have at once the first mention of Christian baptism in the apostolic Church, and the first account of its administration. Peter had preached his great sermon to the multitude on the day of Pentecost. And when, with the pangs of conviction in their hearts, they cried out, "Brethren, what shall we do?" the apostle replied, "Repent and be baptized every one of you upon (ἐπί)[1] the name of Jesus Christ unto (εἰς) the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." And as the result of this appeal, we are told, "they that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them

[1] ἐπί, not ἐν. See Holtzmann in *Hand-Commentar, in loco.*

in that day about three thousand souls" (Acts ii. 37–41). Here the apostle exhorts to baptism, indeed, but first of all he exhorts to repentance, and moreover, to a repentance that is inspired by faith. For the repentance of which he speaks was not merely a repentance in view of an abstract condition of sinfulness, but specifically repentance because of the sin of rejecting the Messiah whom God had sent. They could not repent of their rejection of Jesus unless they had changed their minds about Him, and had been convinced by what they had seen and heard that day that He was in very truth both Lord and Christ. And the demand for faith is further implied in the fact that the baptism itself was to be "upon the name of Jesus Christ," *i.e.* it was to rest upon faith in His name, a faith that was openly confessed by submission to this definite Christian rite.

Here, then, we have three things that Peter demands—faith, repentance, and baptism; and the question we have to decide is, in what manner baptism was related to the other two. Were faith and repentance merely the conditions of baptism, while baptism itself was the means of salvation? or were faith and repentance the essential means of salvation, while baptism was the symbol and the seal? We get some help towards an answer when we remember that, in default of any instruction to the contrary, those men of Judæa and Jerusalem to whom Peter addressed himself would interpret this demand for baptism in the light of their previous knowledge regarding such a rite, and especially in the light of the baptism of John. John's baptism had never been understood to be anything more than a symbol of the Messianic salvation and a seal set upon those who, through repentance and faith, were willing to enter into the sphere of preparation for it. And it is surely significant that in this passage the relation of *Christian* baptism to the forgiveness of sins is expressed by the identical phrase which is

employed by both Mark and Luke to describe the relation of *John's* baptism to this same blessing of forgiveness (Mark i. 4; Luke iii. 3). Both John's baptism and Christian baptism are characterised as being εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, "unto remission of sins." But hardly any one will be found to maintain that the baptism of the former amounted to the actual impartation of forgiveness. And so those who attempt to discover in the phrase, as used by Peter, a definite assurance that the forgiveness of sins is inherent in Christian baptism, require considerable ingenuity to interpret the same three words in two entirely different ways. Weiss evades the exegetical problem after the convenient fashion that is so often resorted to by critical theorists. He tells us that when the phrase is applied in the Gospels to John's baptism, this is "a secondary feature," *i.e.* an addition to the narratives made at a later time, by which the characteristics of Christian baptism were read into the earlier baptism of the Forerunner.[1] Scholarly ritualists, again, like Cremer and Althaus, made vigorous but not very convincing efforts to show why by εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν Luke meant one thing in his Gospel but quite another thing in the second chapter of Acts;[2] while ritualists of the kind who do not greatly concern themselves about New Testament scholarship, are content simply to assume that in the present case, at all events, the phrase has the meaning which they choose to put upon it. But the fact remains that there is no more exegetical reason in the one case than in the other for supposing that to be baptized "unto the remission of sins" means that the remission of sins is effected by the baptismal rite. The admirable interpretation which Althaus gives of the phrase when it occurs in connection with the baptism of John may

[1] *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, i. 187.

[2] Althaus, *Heilsbedeutung der Taufe*, p. 75; Cremer, *Die Paulinische Rechtfertigungslehre*, p. 286.

very well be adopted here also. Baptism εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, he says, "can by no means affirm a sin-cleansing power inherent in the same, but can only point to forgiveness as a blessing that is had in view in the performance of the rite." [1]

Peter's meaning, accordingly, is that his hearers are to repent, and, looking in faith to Jesus Christ, are to be baptized with a baptism which points to the remission of sins. There is nothing in his words to imply that since the days of John the Baptist the outward rite had assumed a higher relative importance alongside of repentance and faith than it had possessed in the days of the Forerunner. And then he adds, "and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Now here, again, the assumption is constantly made that the apostle's language implies that it was through the medium of baptism that the gift of the Holy Ghost was to be communicated. But, as a matter of mere grammatical construction, it seems evident that the second part of the verse depends upon the whole of the first part, and not merely upon the words "be baptized." That is, Peter promises the gift of the Holy Ghost to those who believe and repent and are baptized. And we have already seen that, of the three things which he demands, faith and repentance are primary and fundamental, while baptism is secondary and symbolic.

It is further to be remarked that this is not only the natural interpretation of the words from the exegetical point of view, but the only one which is in keeping with the historical situation. Peter and the rest had received the gift of the Spirit, not through any water-baptism, but as the direct reward of a faith that clung to the Lord Jesus, and waited patiently for the fulfilment of His promise. How unlikely, then, especially in view of the fact that nothing is said in the words of institution about baptism

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

being the medium of this wonderful gift, that they should imagine that what they themselves had obtained by an immediate bestowal from above was to be communicated to others through the performance of an outward rite. Rather, we must hold that in the view of the apostle the essential conditions of the blessing were the same for the three thousand and for the hundred and twenty, namely, a sincere and penitent faith expressed in outward confession; while for these new disciples the confession was to be made and sealed through the use of this rite which the Lord Himself had ordained, and had ordained neither as a mere arbitrary ceremony nor as a miraculous channel of grace, but because of its symbolic value and its significance as an initiatory rite for those who from time to time should be drawn by the testimony of His disciples into the fellowship of the Christian Church.

It is in keeping with this view, which makes faith, not baptism, the fundamental means of receiving the distinctive Christian gifts, that the members of the young community are described immediately afterwards as "all they that believed" (ver. 44). Indeed, it is worth noting, for it is not a little suggestive, that throughout the whole Book of Acts the term "baptized" is never once used as a general designation of those who belonged to the Christian community.[1] Christians are called "believers" (v. 14), they are referred to as "they that believed" (ii. 44, iv. 32, x. 45, xxii. 19); they are continually called "the brethren," "the disciples," "the saints"; but on no single occasion are they described as "the baptized." And the fact is all the more suggestive because, as baptism was the rite of initiation into a visible

[1] Here, moreover, we have clearly one of those "contemporary notes" which are never to be lost sight of in reading the Book of Acts. For while, as an accurate historian, Luke faithfully sets down the facts as he ascertained them, the phrases in which he describes the facts give us glimpses into his own mind and the minds of his contemporaries. Not only in the earliest days of the Church, then, but at the time when this book was written, the characteristic designations of Christians had no reference to their baptism.

community, and the outward sign and seal of an inward faith, it would have been so natural to describe the members of the community in terms of this distinguishing rite, just as, under the old covenant, men were described as circumcised or uncircumcised, in terms of the distinguishing ceremony of Judaism. But in Acts we have nothing that corresponds to this. Men are never called either the baptized on the one hand, or the unbaptized on the other. And this goes to confirm what has been already said regarding the relation of baptism to faith in the preaching and practice of the earliest Church.

This view is still further confirmed when we pass to the following chapter, and find that the hortatory part of Peter's sermon in Solomon's porch is summed up in the words, "Repent ye, therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" (iii. 19). Here there is no mention of baptism whatever; and when we are told in the beginning of the fourth chapter that the result of this second sermon was that "many of them which heard the word believed, and the number of the men was about five thousand" (iv. 4), there is a similar absence of any reference to baptism in connection with these fresh accessions to the Church. This does not show, of course, that baptism was not demanded and administered, for demanded and administered it assuredly would be. But it points, at all events, to the conclusion that baptism was not regarded either by Peter or by the author of Acts as the very medium of salvation, since otherwise it could hardly have failed to obtain on such an occasion a central place both in the original preaching and in the historical record.[1]

[1] It is frequently said that the reason why baptism is referred to in the apostolic sermons with such infrequency, as compared with faith, is that it is taken for granted as the *sine quâ non* of Christianity. That it is taken for granted is doubtless true, for genuine faith in those days was invariably followed by a confession of faith, and confession was sealed in baptism. But surely it is

The next passage that specially concerns us is the account of the mission to Samaria in the eighth chapter (vers. 4–25). Various matters of interest meet us here. We notice, first, that the way in which baptism is spoken of, both in the case of the Samaritans generally and in the special case of Simon the sorcerer (vers. 12 and 13), does not imply anything more than this, that the rite of baptism was administered to those who made profession of their Christian faith. It is not even hinted that any mysterious communication of grace was bound up with the ordinance, whether the forgiveness of sins or the gift of the Holy Spirit. In view of his previous statements, we can only understand the historian to mean that, having professed their faith in Jesus' name, these believers were baptized into that name, and so were reckoned among Christ's disciples. But in Simon Magus we have the case of a man whose profession soon turned out to be unworthy and unreal; and Peter's language shows quite plainly that, because of this, Simon's baptism availed him nothing. No gift of grace had come to him through the administration of the rite. He was still "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." Nor is it possible to make any deduction in favour of a ritualistic interpretation of the incident from the fact that Peter does not call upon him to be rebaptized, but only to repent; as if this suggested that by means of the sacrament Simon had received, after all, some hidden germ of blessing which at some future time might grow into fulness of life. To speak in this way is really to argue without premises. We might as well say that because Peter in Solomon's porch

a mistake to argue in a case like the present from silence to comparative importance, especially in view of the fact that to Peter's audience the idea that baptism was the medium of the forgiveness of sins and of the gift of the Holy Ghost would be entirely novel. It is worth noting that baptism is far more prominent in the recorded ministry of John the Baptist than in that of the apostles, a fact which it is difficult to reconcile with the High Church theory of the relative values of the two baptisms.

summoned his audience to repentance and conversion, but said nothing about baptism, he therefore held that in the case of the converts of that day the rite might be dispensed with. The truth is, that Peter's silence regarding baptism, in the one case as in the other, proves nothing except this, that in all his preaching, faith and repentance were the things he thought of first of all, and most of all.

With regard to the visit of Peter and John to Samaria, and the reception of the Holy Ghost by Philip's converts, we must set aside as altogether untenable the idea that the two apostles came from Jerusalem in a capacity of formal authority as representing an "Apostolic College," and that they came to administer a sacrament of confirmation which could only be imparted by apostolic hands, and without which those Samaritan believers would have lacked something that was essential to their Christianity. Such an idea is a pure anachronism, an ascription to the Church of the apostles of the ways and thoughts of a later age. Instead of bishops being in these respects the successors of the apostles, it is nearer the truth, as Professor McGiffert remarks, to say that the apostles have been made the successors of the bishops.[1] The fact that Peter and John are said to have been sent by the apostles (ver. 14) must be read in the light of other statements with regard to still more important occasions than the conversion of the Samaritans. It is "the apostles and brethren" to whom the news is brought of the admission to the Church of Cornelius and his friends (xi. 1); it is "they of the circumcision" to whom Peter explains his action at Cæsarea (xi. 2); it is "the Church which was in Jerusalem" that sends out Barnabas as a delegate to the Christians of Antioch (xi. 22); it is "the apostles and elders with the

[1] *History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*, p. 97. Cf. Gunkel, *Die Wirkungen des heiligen Geistes nach der populären Anschauung der apostolischen Zeit*, p. 48.

whole Church" who discuss the question whether Gentile Christians are to be circumcised or not (xv. 22). It is hardly legitimate, therefore, to maintain that the visit of the two apostles to Samaria goes to prove the claim on the part of an apostolic college to be possessed of an absolute official authority, and also of a mysterious power of communicating necessary grace. If in this case the apostles acted independently of the rest of the brethren, an explanation may be found in the circumstance mentioned in the 1st verse of the chapter, that at that time the members of the Jerusalem Church "were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles." And whatever the Twelve may have done on this occasion, it is perfectly evident that on similar and not less important occasions it was the Church as a whole by which action was taken.

As for the imposition of hands (ver. 17), it was no formal rite of apostolic confirmation, but a piece of natural and beautiful symbolism accompanying prayer (ver. 15). It had come down from Old Testament times (Gen. xlviii. 14; Deut. xxxiv. 9); it was used by Jesus in blessing little children; Ananias, an obscure Christian of Damascus, employed it in connection with the baptism of Paul; and so did the prophets and teachers of Antioch in sending out Paul and Barnabas on their missionary enterprise. Bishop Gore, indeed, says that "the narrative of the Acts assures us that the apostles laid their hands on all Christians after their baptism, in order by this means to impart to them that gift of the Holy Ghost which is the essence of the Christian life."[1] But so far is this from being a correct statement of the testimony of Acts, that in the great majority of cases in which it mentions baptism, there is not the faintest suggestion of such a thing as the apostolic laying-on of hands, while in some cases—for example, those of Paul, the Ethiopian eunuch, and the first

[1] *The Church and the Ministry*, pp. 257, 258.

converts at Antioch—such a procedure is manifestly excluded.[1] We have no reason, accordingly, to suppose that the visit of Peter and John to Samaria was due to the fact that Philip's converts lacked the very "essence of the Christian life" until the apostles had laid their hands upon them. Their errand rather was analogous to that of Barnabas to Antioch, as recorded in a later chapter (xi. 22–24). It is amply accounted for by the interest felt in Jerusalem in a situation so novel as the reception into the Christian fellowship of a non-Jewish community; and perhaps, we may add, by the earlier associations of Peter and John with Samaria in particular, in the days when they had followed their Master (Luke ix. 52 ff., xvii. 11 ff.; John iv.). But how are we to understand the statement (vers. 15–17) that as yet the Holy Ghost was fallen (ἐπιπεπτωκός) upon none of them, and that they were only baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus; but that when the apostles prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, and laid their hands upon them, the gift was bestowed? We cannot take this to mean that the Samaritans, up to this point, had not received the essential gift of spiritual life, that they were still, in fact, unregenerate persons. The advocates of a doctrine of baptismal regeneration should be at one here

[1] Mr. Knowling says, "Undoubtedly there are cases of baptism (Acts ii. 41; xvi. 15, 33) where no reference is made to a subsequent performance of this rite, but in these cases it must be remembered that the baptizer was an apostle, and that when this was the case its observance might fairly be assumed" (*Expositor's Greek Testament*, ii. 217). This statement is doubly misleading. In the first place, it assumes that in all cases of baptism where no reference is made to a subsequent performance of the rite of confirmation, the persons who baptized were apostles. What, then, of the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch by Philip the Evangelist, of Paul by Ananias, and even of Cornelius and his friends, not by Peter but by some person or persons unknown? In the second place, it appears to assume that where an apostle was present at a baptism he was himself the baptizer. But this also very obviously was not the case (cf. Acts x. 48 and 1 Cor. i. 14–16). As a matter of fact, there is not a single instance in the Book of Acts from beginning to end in which it is expressly intimated of any apostle that he personally performed the act of baptism.

with those who believe in regeneration through faith, for these men had not only believed but been baptized (ver. 12). Besides, when we leave out of sight the special case of Simon Magus, the narrative does not permit us to doubt that the Samaritan believers were already regenerate men (cf. vers. 8, 12, 14). Notice, especially, that when it is said that Samaria "had received the word of God," this is the very same phrase as is applied to Cornelius and his companions after they had believed, and received the Holy Ghost, and been admitted by baptism into the membership of the Church (xi. 1). What the apostles besought in prayer, therefore, on behalf of the Samaritan converts, was not what Bishop Gore calls "the essence of the Christian life," but an outward manifestation, what Paul calls a φανέρωσις (1 Cor. xii. 7), of the indwelling Spirit in those visible and striking forms which had been witnessed in Jerusalem, and which in the early days of the Church were looked upon as the most convincing and satisfactory evidence of the possession of the Holy Ghost.[1] The words ἐπιπεπτωκός (ver. 16) and ἰδών (ver. 18), and the fact that even so unspiritual a person as Simon Magus perceived the manifestation of the Spirit, all show that it is something outward and startling to which the narrative refers. The prayer of the apostles was that the Holy Spirit, who already dwelt in the hearts of those men through faith, might be manifested in charismatic ways, so that not only the Samaritan believers themselves, but all others, might know that the ascended Lord was owning and endowing

[1] Weiss (*Biblical Theology of the N. T.*, i. 182) and Gunkel (*Die Wirkungen des heiligen Geistes*, pp. 6, 7) overstate the case when they say that in Acts the Spirit nowhere appears as the principle of the Christian life, a conception for which we have to turn to Paul with his doctrine of the Spirit as the regenerating and sanctifying power. But it is so far true that in Acts the Spirit mainly comes before us not as the essence of the regenerate life, but as a special supernatural endowment by which the possession of essential Christianity is demonstrated, and believers at the same time are equipped in extraordinary ways (prophecy, miracle, etc.) for Christian service.

the Church in Samaria no less signally than He had already owned and endowed the mother Church in Jerusalem.[1]

The story of the Ethiopian eunuch, recorded in the latter part of the eighth chapter (26–39), supports the view we have just taken with regard to Philip's converts in Samaria, namely, that they had not to wait for the imposition of apostolic hands before becoming Christians in the fullest sense of the word.[2] For otherwise we should have to infer in the case of this eunuch, who was passing south on his way to Ethiopia when Philip met him in the desert, that the joy with which he went upon his way after parting from the evangelist was a littte premature, since he had not received that gift of confirmation which is supposed by some to amount to the very essence of Christianity; and we must remember that there were no apostles in Ethiopia from whose hands he might hope to obtain it. The narrative, however, leaves little room for inferences which in any way would unchristianize this interesting convert. And with regard to his baptism, it is worth noticing that it was the eunuch himself who proposed it, and who took the initiative in the whole matter; a fact which is made still clearer when verse 37

[1] Gore assumes "that this bestowal of the Holy Ghost was only *accompanied* by the special charismata of prophesying, tongues, etc., while its essence lay in the bestowal of that presence which is permanent in the Christian Church, and which makes the Christian the temple of God." And this bestowal was "mediated by the same laying-on of hands"; confirmation was "nothing less than the instrument of divine bestowal" (*The Church and the Ministry*, pp. 258, 259). Language such as this appears inconsistent not only with the teaching of the N.T. as to the efficacy of faith, but even with the views of Dr. Gore himself as to the efficacy of baptism. For "baptismal regeneration" is really stripped of its meaning if it does not include, in some form or other, the bestowal of essential Christian life.

[2] The eunuch is sometimes referred to as the first Gentile convert. But his journey to Jerusalem as a worshipper, and his study of the prophet Isaiah, certainly suggest that, if not a born Jew, he was at least a proselyte. No doubt Deuteronomy xxiii. 1 would seem to exclude the possibility of any eunuch being received into the congregation of Israel. But it is not certain that the prohibition was strictly enforced (cf. Isa. lvi. 3–5); and in any case we must remember that εὐνοῦχος is sometimes employed simply as an official designation.

is omitted, as in the Revised Text. Baptism, then, according to this narrative, was not a rite to which a man passively submitted, but an act in which his will as well as his faith was strongly involved. It was, in fact, the point at which feeling passed into deed, and faith blossomed into open confession. And though verse 37 appears to be a later gloss, possibly a formula of question and answer that had come to be used by way of a baptismal confession, it does not do more than express what the rest of the narrative already implies, that the eunuch was a man of hearty faith, and a man who desired in baptism to make confession of that Jesus whom the evangelist had just been preaching to him.

Reserving for the next lecture the account of Paul's conversion in the ninth chapter of Acts, we come now to the incidents which took place in the house of Cornelius. To the primitive Church this was an episode of immense significance, involving as it did the free opening of the door to the Gentiles; and the sense of its importance is evidenced by the detailed and repeated references to it which are given by the historian. The events at Cæsarea seem to corroborate in a very striking manner the conclusions to which we have already been led regarding the place that was assigned to baptism in the preaching and practice of the apostles. Observe, in the first place, that the address which Peter delivered in the centurion's house concludes with the words, "Whosoever believeth in Him (*i.e.* in Jesus Christ) shall receive remission of sins." In summing up his gospel message, then, Peter gives faith a solitary position as the instrument of salvation, and makes no mention whatever of baptism.[1] Observe, again, that

[1] It is true that Peter had not said all he meant to say when he was interrupted by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit (cf. x. 44, xi. 15). But nothing can be made of this circumstance to the advantage of a ritualistic interpretation of the passage. The fact that the apostle broke off his address without any reference to baptism is only the more significant if the responsibility for it is transferred from Peter himself to the Holy Ghost.

the faith of Cornelius and his friends (cf. xi. 17 and xv. 9) was accepted by God, though they had not been baptized; for while Peter was yet speaking, and before baptism had been so much as alluded to, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word.[1]

Now, with regard to this case of Cornelius, the attempt is constantly made to explain away or minimise the very striking fact that the Holy Ghost was bestowed prior to the baptismal act, and quite independently of its administration. Dr. Moberly, indeed, with characteristic boldness, goes much further, and affirms that "the principle that Spirit-baptism was not to be without water is never enforced quite so strongly as when Cornelius and his companions, even after they had first (for special reasons) received the presence of the Holy Ghost — a presence made manifest by miracle—were nevertheless ordered to be baptized."[2] What Dr. Moberly means by "the principle that Spirit-baptism was not to be without water" is explained on an earlier page, where he speaks more generally of "the principle that inward acts through outward, grace through means of grace, Spirit through Body."[3] And this is the principle which "is never enforced quite so strongly" as in the case of Cornelius and his companions; although, in point of fact, on that occasion the inward acted immediately without any intervention of the outward, grace was bestowed without any sacramental means of grace, the Spirit came down upon those believers through no bodily medium whatsoever! But Dr. Moberly apart, writers of his school usually treat the case of the household at Cæsarea as the solitary exception to a general rule, and attribute its exceptional character to the divine purpose of opening the

[1] In this case the coming of the Holy Ghost undoubtedly implied the bestowal of the essential Christian life, inasmuch as these persons, up to this point, had been heathens. But on this occasion the essential gift was immediately accompanied by outward manifestations of a charismatic nature.

[2] *Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 108.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 106.

eyes of the mother Church at Jerusalem to the novel and strange idea that, without circumcision or any preliminary training in the school of Jewish proselytism, a Gentile might be admitted into the kingdom of God. As a matter of fact, however, the events at Cæsarea opened the eyes of the Church to this great truth in entire independence of the question whether or not, in this particular case, there was a departure from the customary *ordo salutis*. In the subsequent references to what took place in the house of Cornelius, it is not the descent of the Spirit previous to baptism that is ever represented as impressing those who heard of it, but the fact that the Spirit should have been given to uncircumcised Gentiles at all. And further, it must be remembered that the case was not so absolutely exceptional as is frequently assumed; for, as we have pointed out already, it was a repetition in the experience of the first Gentile Christians of what took place at Pentecost in the experience of the first Jewish Christians, namely, a baptism with the Spirit independently of any baptism with water. This did not mean, however, that water-baptism might now be ignored. The Lord had appointed it to be used in connection with all new disciple-making, and so Peter commanded it to be performed, even in the case of these Spirit-filled converts. The case of Cornelius and his friends, accordingly, furnishes no argument against the observance of the sacrament, but it certainly points to a very definite conclusion as to its nature, and goes to show that baptism was not the medium of regenerating grace. The cases of the one hundred and twenty Jewish disciples in the upper room, and of this Gentile company at Cæsarea, are exceptional, no doubt; but they are exceptional chiefly in the sense in which all beginnings are exceptional, a sense which makes them at the same time typical, in regard to all essential matters, for every case that follows. These two parallel episodes, therefore, may be held as proving to

us, alike for the Jew and the Gentile, that it is not through the channel of water-baptism that the gifts of the Spirit are communicated to the soul.

And now notice what Peter says regarding the baptism of these Spirit-filled persons: "Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" That is, he looks upon baptism as a privilege which ought not to be withheld from them, in view of the proofs already given of their possession of the Spirit. Their baptism was not the channel of any mysterious grace, but the symbol, on the one hand, of that remission of sins, through faith in Jesus Christ, of which the apostle had just preached to them;[1] and a token, on the other, appointed by the Lord Himself, of their admission into the visible community, and their right, uncircumcised Gentiles though they were, to all the prerogatives of the Christian brotherhood. Nor is it without significance that Peter apparently did not baptize these converts with his own hands. His conduct at Cæsarea, even on such a special occasion, reminds us of Paul's ordinary practice at Corinth (1 Cor. i. 14–17). If either the one apostle or the other had held that baptism was the actual conveyance of saving blessings which in the preaching of the word are only offered, would he not inevitably have magnified the office of baptizing above that of preaching? But evidently neither of them did this. Paul did not, as we know from his own direct statements. And with regard to Peter, while it is quite possible that he sometimes took a personal part, just as Paul occasionally did, in the work of baptizing, it is yet the fact that he is never once said to have done so.[2]

[1] Cf. xi. 17, xv. 8, 9, for the emphasis that is laid on the fact of their faith.

[2] Mr. Rackham explains the circumstance that the apostles appear in general not to have personally administered the sacrament, by saying that in this respect they were following their Lord's example (John iv. 2). This is so far true. But notice the immense difference between the preparatory baptism of repentance

The view we have taken of the narrative in the tenth chapter of Acts is confirmed by the chapter following, where we find Peter back in Jerusalem, and giving an account to the Church of the events at Cæsarea (xi. 1–18). It is noteworthy that throughout the narrative the fact that by his orders those Cæsarean converts had been baptized is never once alluded to. The news that came to the apostles and brethren in Judæa was not that certain Gentiles had been baptized, as one would expect if their baptism was the essential matter, but "that the Gentiles also had received the word of God." The charge brought against Peter by those of the circumcision who were inclined to find fault with his conduct was not that he had administered the saving rite of baptism to uncircumcised men, but that he had eaten at the same table with them. And when the apostle expounds the whole matter in order to his brethren, he does not so much as refer to the performance of the baptismal rite, but sees in what took place in the house of Cornelius a Pentecost of the Gentiles, a repetition of the wonders of that momentous day when the Holy Spirit came down upon the first disciples like tongues of fire. This is the point that he emphasises again and again. "The Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning." "Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that He said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." "God gave them the like gift as He did unto us who believed on the Lord Jesus" (vers. 15–17). Is it not made plain, by these reiterated parallels which Peter draws between the events in the house of the centurion and those in the upper room in Jerusalem, that he does not mean that the gift which

carried on by Christ's disciples during His early ministry and this Christian baptism *as Mr. Rackham himself regards it.* On a previous page he has said: "There was a great difference between the two baptisms. One was the shadow, the other the substance. One was with water only, the other with water and the Holy Ghost" (*Acts*, pp. 30 and 33).

God bestowed upon Cornelius and the rest was mediated or in any way conditioned by the rite of water-baptism? And when he goes on to ask, "Who was I that I could withstand God?" it is impossible to understand him to say, "Who was I that I could withhold from those men the gift of the Spirit which God meant them to receive?" For they had that gift already, and it was Peter's neither to withhold nor to impart. His words can only mean, "Who was I that I could withstand God's evident intention that the Church should recognise those Spirit-filled believers as true Christians, and should welcome them into the brotherhood in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the use of the appointed ordinance?" And not less suggestive than Peter's words is the language employed by the disciples in Jerusalem when they had received the apostle's statement. They glorified God, not because the Gentiles had received the grace of baptism, but because, as they said, "to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life" (ver. 18).

We have yet another account in Acts of that memorable day at Cæsarea, and once more it is Peter himself who is the narrator. His final utterance was made at the celebrated conference in Jerusalem, of which we are told in the fifteenth chapter. The question before the assembly was whether or not Gentile Christians ought to be circumcised. And what does Peter say? His words are worth quoting somewhat fully: "Brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, which knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith" (vers. 7–9). And further on he adds, "But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as

they" (ver. 11). Not only is baptism not mentioned, not only is the Holy Ghost said to have been directly bestowed, but the cleansing from sin is described as the simple result of faith. And more even than that. Speaking to a gathering which included the apostles and elders of the Judæan Church and the delegates from Antioch, the representatives, *i.e.* of both Jewish and Gentile Christianity, Peter claimed that in these respects the experience of Cornelius and his friends was in no wise exceptional. The Holy Ghost was given to them "even as unto us"; and God "made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith." Could we have a clearer indication of the fact that baptism, notwithstanding all its meaning and all its value, is not in itself either the sin-cleansing channel or the medium through which the divine life is bestowed? And the closing words of the speaker are not less emphatic: "We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in like manner as they." That is, so far from regarding the case of Cornelius as something very exceptional, he sees in it an illustration of the ordinary way in which men may hope to be saved.

II. This concludes the evidence from the Book of Acts for the general apostolic view of baptism. But now we have to examine the further material that awaits us, outside of Acts, in the non-Pauline books that bear upon our topic. To do this it will not be sufficient merely to pick out the few passages in those writings in which baptism is mentioned, or is supposed to be referred to, and to endeavour from these to construct a doctrine of the sacrament. We have to consider the perspective in which the rite appears when it is mentioned in any particular book. We have also to consider the fact that, upon the whole and speaking comparatively, so little mention is made of the sacrament in connection with the doctrine

of salvation. For certainly the argument from silence, though often precarious and always requiring to be employed with discrimination and caution, has its legitimate application. If it were only a question of establishing the fact that the rite of baptism was universally observed in the primitive Church, the silence of any particular writer would not affect the sufficient testimony of others. But the case is different when the point that immediately concerns us is the *doctrine* of baptism, the place which it held in the mind of the Church, and especially its relation to faith and to salvation. Here the only satisfactory method of procedure is to examine each of the books in turn, except such as are so brief or so non-doctrinal that they yield practically no materials for our inquiry; and, in doing so, to weigh the fact of silence as to baptism no less than the fact of speech regarding it, and again in considering the latter to bear in mind the connection in which baptism is set, and the proportional place which it receives in the doctrinal scheme of the author. We shall look, therefore, in what remains of this lecture, and in what we take to be the probable chronological order, at the evidence of James, 1 Peter, Hebrews, the Apocalypse, and the Gospel and First Epistle of John. The remaining non-Pauline books may be left out of view as furnishing no contribution to our present study.

And first we shall take the Epistle of James, which is now generally admitted to be either the earliest or one of the latest of the New Testament writings, the idea that it was written soon after Paul's most characteristic doctrinal Epistles, and by way of a polemical rejoinder to Paul's doctrine of faith, being practically abandoned.[1] Baptism

[1] The chronological problem of James may be regarded as still *sub lite*. But a powerful case for the very early date which we have assumed has been recently presented by Professors J. B. Mayor in England and Zahn in Germany, the former in the introduction to his *Epistle of St. James* (2nd ed.) and his article "James" in Hastings' *D. B.*, vol. ii.; the latter in his *Einleitung*, i. 52 ff.

is never once mentioned in James, nor even, it would seem, in the most distant fashion alluded to. This is a striking fact, if James is the earliest book in the New Testament, the one that stands in the closest relation to the Church of the first days. But we may add that it would be in some respects not less but even more significant if we had to adopt the second century date advocated by many influential critics, inasmuch as it would then testify to a freedom from sacramentarian conceptions in the case of a canonical author of the sub-apostolic age. For in regard to this writer it is inevitable that we should draw some inferences from his silence as to baptism, seeing that he touches repeatedly upon topics from which baptism is altogether inseparable when it is looked upon as the medium of salvation. He speaks, for example, of the way of salvation (i. 21, v. 19, 20), of the spiritual birth (i. 18), of justification (ii. 24); and again and again he speaks of Christian faith. So far from disparaging faith in itself, as is sometimes represented, he implies that it is the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ which entitles men to be regarded as members of the Christian brotherhood (ii. 1), and that it is as being rich in faith that the poor become heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him (ii. 5). And as he sees the subjective side of salvation in a living faith which manifests itself in good works, so he sees its objective side in the will of God regenerating men through the medium of His own word of truth. "Of His own will," he writes, "He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures" (i. 18). Hence he gives this exhortation to his readers, "Receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls," *i.e.* exercise towards it that receptivity of faith which brings this living word with quickening power into your hearts.

Judging from this Epistle, James did not regard baptism as in any sense the means of regeneration, or even as vitally connected with the work of salvation, otherwise it is difficult to see how he could have refrained so entirely from making any reference to it. And we may remember that it would have been all the more natural for the author to speak of an outward rite like baptism in connection with his doctrine of salvation, if he had held it to form an essential part of that doctrine, inasmuch as the special point of the whole Epistle lies in its vigorous protest against a one-sided spiritualism, and its emphatic assertion of the essentiality of the outward for a true religious life. And so, even when he uses that word *θρησκεία* (i. 27), which both in the Authorised and Revised Versions is very inadequately rendered "religion," and which properly denotes the external cultus or ceremonial service of religion, it is not in anything pertaining to the ritual order that he finds the characteristic *θρησκεία* of Christianity, but in visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keeping one's self unspotted from the world. According to James, as Coleridge finely says, "the outward service (*θρησκεία*) of ancient religion, the rites, ceremonies, and ceremonial vestments of the old law, had morality for their substance. They were the letter of which morality was the spirit; the enigma of which morality was the meaning. But morality itself is the service and ceremonial (*cultus exterior*, *θρησκεία*) of the Christian religion."[1]

From James we pass to 1 Peter, which was probably written during the seventh decade of the first century, and almost certainly by Peter himself. The critical reasons that have been alleged against this position seem to be quite outweighed by the reasons on the other side, together with the strong traditional testimony in favour

[1] *Aids to Reflection*, "Introductory Aphorisms," xxiii.

of the apostle's authorship.[1] Into any discussion of the New Testament doctrine of baptism 1 Peter must always enter, because of the striking but very difficult passage in the third chapter, in which we find a comparison drawn between the saving power of baptism and the salvation of Noah and his household in the ark from the waters of the Flood. But this passage can only properly be read in connection with the general teaching of the Epistle on the subject of salvation. To begin with, we must notice that while the writer's strain is practical rather than theological, he has much to say about regeneration and salvation and the way of obtaining them. Again and again faith is described as the principle of salvation on the subjective side. Our being begotten again, our hope of a heavenly inheritance, our final and full salvation, are all made to depend upon our faith (i. 3, 4, 5). The salvation of our souls is said to be the τέλος, the issue or outcome of our faith (i. 9). And as faith is the subjective means of salvation, the word of God, just as in James, is repeatedly described as the objective means. It is the word of God, more fully referred to as "the word which by the gospel is preached unto you," and with special reference to the glad tidings of Christ's resurrection from the dead, that is expressly set forth as the medium of regeneration (i. 23, 25; cf. i. 3). And as it is this word of God, proclaimed in the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven (i. 12) and received in faith, that works regeneration, so also it is the sincere milk of the word, constantly desired and used, that nourishes the young life of the soul, and so furthers its growth in grace (ii. 2, 3).

Apart from the one passage in the third chapter, the Epistle does not afford the slightest trace of a suggestion

[1] See Dr. Moffatt's excellent statement of the case, *Historical N.T.*, p. 247 ff.; Chase's article on 1 Peter in Hastings' *D.B.*, vol. iii.; and Bigg's comprehensive summary of the evidence in his *St. Peter and St. Jude* in the "International Critical Commentary."

that baptism is necessary before faith can savingly apprehend the word of the gospel. But in that passage we find Peter, in connection with what he says about Christ's preaching to the spirits in prison, telling us that in the days of Noah eight souls were carried safely in the ark through the waters of the Deluge; after which he adds, in the rendering of the Revised Version, "which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism" (iii. 20, 21). The construction at this point is very complicated, and even the figure is somewhat involved. For while baptism is said to present us with a counterpart of the salvation of those who were in the ark, and while water is the common term between the type and the antitype, it was not really water that saved Noah and his family, but the ark which floated on the water. And this, which of course is the historical fact, is brought out in the present passage when διεσώθησαν δι' ὕδατος is rendered, as in the margin of the Revised Version, not "they were saved through (*i.e.* by means of) water," but "they were brought safely through water."[1] Similarly, it is not the water of baptism that brings salvation to the Christian. As Alford remarks, the parenthetical clause, "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh," which immediately follows, is an express protest against any such idea.[2] Baptism does not save us, Peter says, in that material fashion, but only in so far as through it there is made "the claim (ἐπερώτημα) to have a good conscience toward God."[3] The apostle is thus thinking of salvation upon

[1] εἰς ἣν should be taken as a pregnant construction; and δι' ὕδατος, preceded as it is by διεσώθησαν, is much more naturally understood as the local than as the instrumental genitive—the water, *i.e.*, was not the instrument of their salvation, but that from which they escaped. Cf. 1 Cor. iii. 15, σωθήσεται οὕτως δὲ ὡς διὰ πυρός, and Bengel's comment upon the later passage, "ut naufragus mercator, amissa merce et lucro, servatus per undas."

[2] *Greek Testament, in loco.*

[3] The suggestions that have been made for the proper rendering of ἐπερώτημα are very numerous. But "claim" or "demand" appears to be the most

its subjective side when he speaks of baptism as saving us. He is thinking of the power of the ordinance, not indeed to bestow the forgiveness of sins, but to bring home to the consciousness, and so to the conscience, of the believer who seeks the sacrament the assurance that forgiveness has been divinely bestowed. For baptism undoubtedly has this power to deliver a man from a guilty conscience. The Lord has given to the Church a power of binding and of loosing. Not in any magical sense, but by the operation of a great Christian and social law, it is true that whosesoever sins she remits, they are remitted unto them, and whosesoever sins she retains, they are retained.[1] By faithful testimony and pure example, she can keep a sinner alive to a sense of his guilt; and, again, by welcoming the penitent in the spirit of brotherly love, and restoring the fallen in the spirit of meekness, she can bring home to men's hearts the assurance of the forgiving grace of Jesus Christ. And this power to save men from the burden of conscious guilt was never more strikingly exercised than in the social sacrament of baptism as it was practised in the early Church, when penitent souls came forward to confess their faith in Christ, and were lovingly welcomed, in Christ's name and by Christ's appointed ordinance, into the fellowship of His disciples. But baptism has this power of deliverance, the apostle proceeds to say, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is now on the right hand

suitable of all. See Cremer's *Lexicon*, *sub verbo*. Much has also been written on the question whether συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς is the genitive of the subject or of the object. But the analogy in the same clause of σαρκὸς ἀπόθεσις ῥύπου, where the genitive is certainly objective, appears to be decisive in favour of the latter alternative. It is not the claim *of* a good conscience that Peter means, but the claim *for* a good conscience; not the claim presented by a conscience already good, but the claim made by one who desires to have a good conscience toward God.

[1] Cf. F. W. Robertson's sermon on "The Restoration of the Erring," *Sermons*, Second Series, p. 131 ff.

of God (vers. 21, 22). The claim for a good conscience before God, which is presented in baptism, rests wholly upon faith in the Saviour who died and rose again. It is from the risen Christ that the sacrament comes to us, and it is He Himself who makes it effectual as the seal of salvation, when it is used with firm trust in the truth of His word and in His power to fulfil His promises.

Next to 1 Peter we place the anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews, regarding the aim and destination of which so many diverse views continue to be entertained. Into any discussion on these points it is quite unnecessary for us to embark. Whether the unknown author was writing to Jews or to Gentiles, and whether with special reference to the destruction of the temple or not, at all events his work is an elaborate argument designed to show the immense superiority of Christianity over Judaism, and the fulfilment at the same time in Jesus Christ of what had been only imperfectly foreshadowed in the old economy. For the author of the Hebrews, as Ménégoz has said, was an evolutionist and not a revolutionary.[1] Judaism and Christianity presented themselves to him not in absolute antithesis, but as the picture and promise followed by the great reality. The difference in emphasis between him and Paul springs largely from their different ways of looking at the old religion and the new. To Paul they presented themselves as law and gospel, and so came into absolute contrast; but to this writer as two systems of worship, a lower and symbolical, and a higher and archetypal. And as Paul's legal way of dealing with his subject frequently reminds his readers of the fact that he was a trained Jewish lawyer, the author of Hebrews often suggests to us that he may at one time

[1] "L'auteur de l'Epître aux Hébreux est un évolutionniste; Saint Paul est un révolutionnaire, en prenant ce terme en son sens exclusivement moral et religieux" (*La Théologie de l'Epître aux Hébreux*, p. 190).

have been a consecrated Jewish priest. In any case, it is out of the fulness of intimate knowledge that he compares Judaism and Christianity as two paths of approach into the presence of God. But, for the very reason that this author sets himself with full knowledge of details to show the relation between the old symbolic worship and the new one of immediate realities, we should expect that if "the sacramental principle," in the sense in which the phrase is used by High Churchmen, had possessed for him the primary significance which it is frequently supposed to have had,[1] he would not have failed to develop it along the obvious lines in the exposition of his subject. He would have drawn an express contrast between the merely emblematic ceremonial lustrations of the old covenant and a baptism which actually regenerates the soul, between a priesthood which depended upon the purely physical principle of hereditary succession and one that is communicated by apostolic ordination and apostolical succession, between a priest who offered in the sanctuary a bull or a goat and one who can call down from heaven the very Lamb of God and lay Him afresh as a sacrifice upon the altar. As a matter of fact, however, the contrast we really find in Hebrews is between a religion that is elaborate, sensuous, and transient, and one that is simple, spiritual, and heavenly. The way of salvation is a spiritual way. The heavenly calling comes to us through a heavenly word. God, who spake in times past to the fathers in the prophets, now speaks to us in His own Son (i. 1, 2); while the word of God's Son, who is also our Lord, is confirmed to us by them that heard it (ii. 3). Not to give earnest heed to the word spoken is to neglect the great salvation (ii. 1, 3). And here, just as in James and 1 Peter, this word of salvation is appropriated by faith. For though the author

[1] See, for example, Moberly, *Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 268 ff.; Gore, *Body of Christ*, p. 250 ff.

has a peculiar view of faith, not so much as the power that binds us in a personal union to Christ, but rather as a faculty of realising the invisible—"an assurance of things hoped for," as he calls it, "a conviction of things not seen" (xi. 1),—it is faith, nevertheless, that is constantly presented as the human side of that work of salvation of which the loving will of God, as expressed in His word, is the divine side.[1] The word preached brings no profit unless it is mixed with faith in those who hear it (iv. 2). And in the fourth chapter it is shown throughout that, as it was unbelief that made the word of God of no effect in the former days, so it is faith that now brings the fulfilment of the divine promises and an entrance into rest.

There is one passage in the Epistle in which baptism is mentioned, and another in which it is probably referred to. In the beginning of the sixth chapter "the teaching of baptisms" is spoken of as one of the elementary subjects of Christian instruction, in association with repentance, faith, the laying-on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment (vers. 1, 2). This passage may be held as showing that the administration of the rite was conditional on repentance and faith, and it also proves that instruction was given as to the distinctive meaning of Christian baptism. For by the plural form, "the teaching of baptisms," we are probably to understand teaching as to the distinction between Christian baptism and other kinds of baptism which were known to the readers of the Epistle, such as the baptism of John and those Jewish lustrations which the writer describes elsewhere as "carnal ordinances" (ix. 10).[2] But as to

[1] Cf. Professor Denney, *The Death of Christ*, p. 239 f.

[2] This passage further makes it evident that, in the circle to which this writer and his readers belonged, it was customary to lay hands on the baptized. But, as we have seen already, the laying-on of hands was by no means confined to the apostles, and does not appear to have been anything more than an appropriate symbol accompanying a prayer for the bestowal of spiritual blessing.

the particular nature of the teaching that was given, the present passage has nothing to tell us. It simply shows that Christians were instructed with regard to the meaning of baptism, as of other important doctrinal subjects.[1]

In the tenth chapter, again, after describing the new and living way of approach to God which Jesus has opened for us by His sacrifice, the author proceeds, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our body washed with pure water" (ver. 22). Calvin and others have sought to interpret these words as pointing to an ethical renewal wrought through the Spirit as *aqua spiritalis*, the idea of baptism being altogether excluded. But the best commentators of all schools are now pretty well agreed that there is a reference to baptism in the last clause of the verse. At the same time, it is not immediately apparent what precise influence or significance is attributed to the rite. For the author specifies two conditions of drawing near to God—"hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," and a "body washed with pure water"; and it is the latter phrase that immediately suggests the thought of baptism. The sprinkling of the conscience is a sprinkling not with water but with Christ's blood, the reference being quite evidently to a phrase in the preceding chapter in which the blood of Christ is spoken of as cleansing the conscience from dead works to serve the living God (ix. 14). The question, accordingly, is as to the relation to each other of the two conditions of approach to God. Now, underlying the

[1] It is sometimes assumed that φωτισθέντας in verse 4 is a synonym for "baptized"; but there is no proof of this, and it is extremely unlikely. It is true that in the second century φωτισμός became a common designation for baptism; but, as it meets us here, the idea of being enlightened does not suggest anything more than the familiar N.T. idea that by faith in Jesus Christ we are translated from darkness to light. It was a later notion to identify the Christian's enlightenment with the ritual act of baptism. See Anrich, *Das antike Mysterienwesen*, p. 125 f.

passage there is clearly an allusion to the way in which the priests of the old dispensation were consecrated to their office by being sprinkled with blood, and prepared by lustrations for discharging their functions in the sanctuary.[1] If, therefore, we follow strictly the analogy of the Old Testament types, we come to this result, that Christ's sacrifice, appropriated of course by personal faith, consecrates His people as priests to God; while baptism fulfils the secondary function of qualifying them, after their consecration, for admission into God's house. This would amount to saying that baptism is the rite of initiation, the sacrament whereby those whose spiritual priesthood has already been secured are formally admitted into the fellowship of the Church which is God's spiritual temple. Or if, again, we fasten not upon the Old Testament analogies which the author has in his mind, but upon the two subjects which he expressly distinguishes, namely, the heart and conscience on the one side and the body on the other, we might conclude that he holds that while Christ's sacrifice, appropriated by faith, delivers the conscience from guilt, baptism has some special effect upon the bodily nature. This interpretation would bring the statement more or less into line with certain speculative theories of a mystical and half-theosophic kind which have been much advocated by some Lutheran and Anglican writers. Then we might say that faith is the moral and psychological, or subjective and personal, side of the gracious work of salvation, while baptism has to do with the essential life, as being the actual introduction of a germ of divine life into the spiritual-corporeal organism. But in spite of all the ingenious and beautiful applications that have sometimes been made of it,[2] there is almost

[1] See Exod. xxix. 21; Lev. viii. 30 for the consecration by the sprinkled blood; and Exod. xxx. 20, xl. 30–32; Lev. xvi. 24, for the lustrations that preceded sacrifice.

[2] See, *e.g.*, Martensen's *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 424 ff.

nothing in Scripture that lends support to this germ-theory of baptism, with its quasi-physical view of the way of salvation. And looking in particular at the passage before us, there appears to be absolutely nothing in it that can justly be advanced in support of that materialistic way of thinking which has been identified by so many High Church writers with the true sacramental principle.

We are following the soundest line of exegesis when we say, with Professor A. B. Davidson, that "the rhetorical balancing of parts must not be made a doctrinal distinction of effects."[1] On the one hand, it is not likely that the author means us to follow out too minutely the analogy of the Old Testament types, and so to seek in the first half of the verse for something that corresponds to the consecration of the priest, and in the second half for something else that corresponds to the priest's bath of ritual cleansing. And, on the other hand, it is just as unlikely that he means us to distinguish between the washing of the body and the cleansing of the heart, as if the latter pointed to the work of faith, while the former implied some distinct effect produced by baptism upon the spiritual-corporeal nature. As Professor Davidson remarks, *σῶμα* appears to be introduced simply because, as a matter both of fact and of necessity, it is to the body that water is applied in baptism. And so, in all likelihood, the two cleansings refer to one and the same thing, and the relation between them is just the familiar relation between the inward and the outward, the spiritual effect and its symbolic expression and seal. It is Christ's sprinkled blood that cleanses the believing conscience, as the writer has already said in the preceding chapter; but the visible washing of the body in baptism symbolises and guarantees that inner cleansing, and so carries a fuller conviction of it to the heart of the recipient, a conviction which is produced partly by the way in which

[1] *Hebrews*, p. 213.

faith is strengthened as it passes into open confession, and partly by the way in which it is still further reinforced when that confession is accepted and ratified by the action of the community. The author lets us see, it may be added, that he is thinking of assurance as brought about by confession, when he goes on to say in the next verse, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it waver not" (ver. 23); an expression which should be compared with the parallel one that occurs in the very same connection at the end of the fourth chapter (iv. 14–16). Baptism is the confession of our faith, and is therefore that in which faith comes to its consummation and fruition. And in particular, baptism brings with it a deliverance of the conscience from the sense of guilt, a confidence of the reality of the forgiveness which God bestows upon the man who accepts the redemption provided in Christ Jesus, so that henceforth he can draw near to God in the full assurance of faith.

The Johannine literature, which next comes before us, includes three types of composition so different from one another as the Apocalypse, the Fourth Gospel, and the three Epistles of John. And it is a conspicuous fact, which has to be admitted even by pronounced sacramentarians,[1] that in the whole of this diversified Johannine literature Christian baptism is never once directly mentioned. This certainly does not justify us to conclude, as some have done, that for John and his school the ordinance was simply non-existent, but it does appear to sanction the view that a primary significance for salvation cannot have been attributed to it within the Johannine circle.

Of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel enough has been said in a previous lecture. With regard to the Apocalypse and the First Epistle of John (the Second and Third Epistles, as has been said, may be left out of consideration in the present study), while it must be admitted that modern

[1] Cf. Althaus, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

criticism has tended more and more to the conclusion that the former was not written by St. John, the verdict on the Epistle has become, on the whole, more favourable to the traditional view than at one time seemed likely. In any case, the close relation between the Gospel and the Epistle, the way in which they mutually complement each other, and the difficulty experienced by critics who describe one of them as a commentary on the other in satisfactorily establishing which of them is commentary and which is text, all appear to point to their having come from the same author. And since there is the best of ground, as we have seen, for believing the Gospel to be the work of the Apostle John himself, it would follow that the Epistle also may be ascribed to him with a large degree of confidence.

It is the less necessary for our present purpose to enter into the discussion as to the authorship of the Apocalypse, as the evidence it yields with regard to baptism is so purely of a negative kind. From the nature of the work, moreover, we cannot look for any full treatment of questions of soteriology; and yet there is enough of incidental reference to make it clear that faith is regarded by the writer as the fundamental means of salvation. Faith, too, in contrast to what we have found in Hebrews, takes here the distinctive Christian form of personal trust in Jesus Christ (*πίστις μου*, *πίστις Ἰησοῦ*).[1] It is true that more is said about works than about faith, but it is shown quite clearly that faith is the presupposition of Christian works (iii. 8, xiv. 12). But what we have specially to notice is, that though the book moves about in a world of symbols, the symbolic ordinance of baptism is never mentioned, nor even apparently alluded to.[2]

[1] See ii. 13, xiv. 12; and cf. ii. 19, xiii. 10.

[2] Some writers have sought to identify the "seal of God" (*σφραγὶς θεοῦ*), which His servants bear on their foreheads (vii. 2, ix. 4; cf. vii. 3, xiv. 1), with the sacrament of baptism, on the ground that at a later time *σφραγὶς* became a common designation for that sacrament. But elsewhere in the book (xiii. 16, xiv. 9, xx. 4) the worshippers of the beast are represented as having received his mark (*χάραγμα*) on their foreheads or on their hands; and Holtzmann's surmise

This silence regarding baptism is all the more striking, as Holtzmann has pointed out, because so often the mention of it lies to the writer's very hand.[1] But the innumerable multitude arrayed in white which stands before the throne is made up not of the baptized, but of those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb (vii. 9–14); and the hundred and forty-four thousand who stand beside the Lamb on Mount Zion are they who bear the impress of His name (xiv. 1). And this makes it difficult to believe that the author of the Apocalypse can have attached to baptism any idea of a fundamental saving significance.

The evidence of the Fourth Gospel came before us in an earlier lecture, in connection with the subject of the relation of Christian baptism to the baptism of John. But now it comes before us again, as bearing upon the question of the general apostolic view of the sacrament. Owing to its constant blending of reflection with testimony, this Gospel is a valuable witness to the mind of the author, and of the circle in which he lived and taught. And it can hardly fail to strike us that John makes very little of the rite of baptism from the point of view of the Christian salvation. This certainly does not entitle us to say that he ignored the rite altogether, but it may justify the inference that he purposely refrained from speaking about it, both as a protest against a prevailing docetic tendency to attach an exclusive importance to the baptism of Jesus, and because in certain quarters there were already threatening to appear superstitious notions as to some magical power

appears to be a probable one, that in both cases the seal or mark is taken from the custom of branding slaves or soldiers, as the seal of their service (*Hand-Commentar*, note on Rev. vii. 3). The idea that baptism is specially suggested by the setting of the seal upon the forehead, as if this were an allusion to the sprinkling of the baptismal water on the brow, is discounted by the fact that baptism, as it characteristically meets us in the N.T., is baptism by immersion.

[1] *N.T. Theologie*, i. 380 f. Cf. *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, 22er Jahrgang, Heft iv. p. 404.

that was inherent in the sacrament.[1] At all events, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he can hardly have attached to baptism any idea of an essential significance for salvation. For this is not an instance of silence about a subject with which a writer is not concerned. Apart from those cases where he is reproducing the words of Jesus, he refers again and again, on his own account, to the subject of the Christian salvation. And faith in Christ he constantly represents, in the most unqualified manner, as the one condition of obtaining eternal life. It is those who believe on Christ's name who are said to be "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (i. 12, 13). It is he that believeth who hath eternal life (iii. 16, 36). It is they that believe who are said to receive the Spirit (vii. 39). And when he comes to sum up his whole purpose in composing this Gospel, the apostle says, "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that believing (πιστεύοντες, *i.e.* in the very act of believing) ye might have life through His name" (xx. 31).

When we pass to the First Epistle the case is not different. Here also faith appears as the sole essential means of salvation and life. In the very chapter which contains the one passage in the Epistle in which there may be a possible allusion to baptism (v. 6–8), we find such utterances as these: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God" (v. 1); "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (v. 4); "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (v. 5); "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness within himself" (v. 10); "These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye

[1] See Dr. E. A. Abbott's article "Gospels" in *Encyc. Brit.*, 9th edition, x. 830; and Holtzmann, following Volkmar, in *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, *ibid.*, p. 411. Cf. Holtzmann's *N. T. Theologie*, ii. 498, 499.

have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God" (v. 13). If reiterated assertion of a doctrine on the part of a writer can make it plain that he held that doctrine, it seems evident that it was John's conviction that faith, a living faith which brings us into personal union with Jesus Christ, is the one sufficient principle of salvation. And what makes this exaltation of the spiritual principle of faith all the more noteworthy, is the fact that John is pre-eminently the theologian of the Incarnation, the writer who, above all others in the New Testament, might therefore be expected, if the "sacramental principle" were an essential part of the Incarnation theology, as High Church writers constantly assert, to give that principle a central place in his teaching, as setting before us the only possible method of the conveyance of the divine life to men. But instead of this, as every reader can see for himself, both in the Gospel and the Epistle John invariably attributes the reception of salvation to the exercise of faith.

But while Christian baptism is never mentioned in the Johannine writings from first to last, there are three passages in the Gospel and one in the First Epistle in which allusions to the sacrament have been discovered. First comes the familiar incident in the third chapter of the Gospel, where Jesus speaks to Nicodemus of the birth "of water and the Spirit" (iii. 5). This passage we have already discussed in its proper historical setting, namely, in connection with the baptism of John. Speaking at the very commencement of His ministry, and speaking to a Pharisee, our Lord, as we have said, can hardly have been making a statement with regard to a rite that was not instituted till after His death. And even if we suppose that at this early stage in Christ's public history He had already determined upon the institution of the sacrament—a somewhat doubtful hypothesis, perhaps, on any reason-

able view of the development of His Messianic consciousness and His plans for the future of His kingdom—and that in His words there was an allusion at least, though no immediate reference, to the ordinance that He subsequently instituted, at all events there is no more actual efficacy ascribed to baptism than lay in that earlier rite of which our Lord was directly speaking to Nicodemus when He laid down the conditions by which, there and then, a man might enter into the kingdom of God. For we must remember that it was about the kingdom and the conditions of entering it that Nicodemus came to inquire. And we must also remember that Jesus was in the habit, throughout His ministry, of inviting men to enter His kingdom forthwith. Nicodemus and the Pharisees, as a class, needed the baptism of water because it was the baptism of repentance. They also needed the baptism of the Holy Ghost, without which any outward rite must be ineffectual. And the same thing holds of baptism into the name of Jesus Christ Himself. Men require to be born "of water and the Spirit." Of water, because it is the divinely appointed expression of faith and penitence, and the means of union with the Christian community. Of the Spirit, because neither the use of symbols, even though divinely appointed, nor union with the Christian community, though it was Christ Himself who founded it, is of any value without the spiritual life which comes from union with Christ by faith.

Another passage in the Gospel which has been thought by some to bear upon Christian baptism, is the story of the feet-washing at the Last Supper (xiii. 4–11). It is difficult, however, to see how this beautiful and touching incident, in the light of our Lord's own interpretation of it (xiii. 12–17), can be regarded as having any reference to the sacrament whatever. So far from suggesting baptism, the feet-washing is expressly distinguished from that

condition of being "bathed" by which a man is made "clean every whit." On the other hand, if it is said that this being bathed (λελουμένος), which Jesus distinguishes from the washing of the feet, carries with it a direct reference to the sacrament, and implies that Jesus washed the feet of His disciples in order to indicate that baptism with water was the outward preliminary to the action of the Spirit in the new birth,[1] the fact must once more be recalled that the men He was addressing never received Christian baptism at all. And yet they are described, with the exception of the betrayer, as being already "clean." And it should be remembered, further, that in the next chapter but one our Lord says, using the very same word καθαρός which He employs here to describe the result of the being λελουμένος, "already ye are clean, because of the word which I have spoken unto you" (xv. 3), where the thought of any outward rite is absolutely excluded, and the cleansing of the disciples is ascribed immediately to the word which Jesus has spoken.[2]

The remaining passage in the Gospel belongs to the crucifixion scene, where John tells us of the blood and water which he saw flowing from the spear-wound made by the soldier in the side of the dead Jesus (xix. 34). Some writers have seen in this a purely miraculous occurrence, full of mysterious significance.[3] And appeal has been made to the words, "And he that hath seen hath

[1] See Mr. Knight's argument in an article on the relation of our Lord's discourses in John iii. and vi. to the institution of the sacraments, *Expositor*, Ser. v., vol. x. p. 60.

[2] It is a mistake to attempt to limit the καθαροί of xv. 3 to the sense of "pruned," as suggested by the καθαίρει of the previous verse. The ἤδη shows that καθαροί points to the present standing of the disciples; they are already "clean," and so in principle "pruned." But their present standing is just that which in xiii. 10 has been described as a being "clean" through being "bathed," a condition which is now attributed to the influence of the word spoken by their Master.

[3] See Westcott, *Gospel of St. John, in loco;* Farrar, *Early Days of Christianity*, p. 565 ff.

borne witness, and his witness is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye also may believe" (ver. 35), as if they furnished a proof that some extraordinary and supernatural import attached to the blood and water, by which they became the peculiar signs and witnesses of the Messiahship and saving power of Jesus. But when we observe that the words just quoted are connected with the two following verses by the conjunction γάρ, it seems plain that the writer's testimony, read in the light of these two explanatory verses, points not simply to the blood and water but to the whole of the incident, namely, the breaking of the malefactors' legs and the piercing of the Saviour's side, in so far as all this was a fulfilment of words of ancient prophecy. And there is nothing in the prophecies that are here referred to—"A bone of Him shall not be broken," and "They shall look on Him whom they pierced"—to suggest that any mysterious significance is to be attached to the issue of blood and water from the Redeemer's side, much less such a volume of mystical significance as is sometimes read into them.[1] That John may have seen in a purely natural event[2] an allegory of Christ's redeeming and cleansing power, is very credible; that he may still further have been reminded in this connection of the two sacraments of the Lord's Supper and baptism, is less likely, especially in view of his habitual silence regarding them, though of course we cannot say that it is impossible. But it is certainly impossible to derive from a hypothetical allusion to the sacraments, so distant and subtle as this would be, any definite ideas as to the evangelist's sacramental doctrines.

[1] Westcott, *e.g.*, says, "It showed both His true humanity and (in some mysterious sense) the permanence of His human life" (*Ibid.*).

[2] On the view that the flow of blood and water was a purely natural phenomenon, see the statements of Sir James Y. Simpson and Dr. Begbie with reference to Stroud's theory of the physical cause of the death of Christ, as given in Hanna's *Our Lord's Life on Earth*, App. I.

There only remains to be considered the passage in John's First Epistle, in which he speaks of Jesus as coming by water and blood (v. 6–8). The literature on this topic is enormous, and highly perplexing in the diversities of view presented. There seems to be little doubt, however, that the historical coming of Jesus, implied by the aorist (ἐλθών), must refer primarily and immediately to actual events in the Saviour's life on earth, which formed part of His Messianic revelation; and that these events are most naturally found in His baptism in the Jordan and His death upon the Cross, in each of which a special testimony was given to His divine Sonship, a testimony which in verse 8 is combined with the testimony of the Spirit Himself.[1] Any further reference which may underlie this witness of the water and the blood must be regarded as secondary and indirect. That John passed from the thought of two historical moments in the past to the further thought of Christ's continuous power in the present to cleanse and to redeem, as that power was suggested by the mention of the water and the blood, is not at all improbable, and may even be indicated by the change of prepositions from διά to ἐν. And it is at least possible, though again, in view of John's soteriological teaching, hardly probable, that by their natural symbolism water and blood suggested to his mind the sacramental symbols themselves. But what we have to notice is that even if there is here an indirect allusion to the sacraments, this would not prove anything more than that John regarded them as helping to continue in history a testimony to Christ's

[1] The assumption frequently made that the water and blood in this passage must be used by the writer with practically the same reference as the blood and water in John xix. 34, rests upon very slender foundations, especially if the issue of a bloody serum from the wound in the side of Jesus was a natural physical phenomenon, while the reference in the passage before us is to the two historical incidents of Christ's baptism and crucifixion. It is not to be lost sight of, though Alford seeks to make light of it, that in the one case it is "blood and water" of which we read, and in the other "water and blood."

divine power as the Son of God to cleanse and to redeem, a function which they undoubtedly do discharge upon any view of their doctrinal significance, even the very lowest which it is possible to take. For we must notice the manner in which this mention of the water and the blood is introduced. It is purely by way of parenthesis, and simply because they serve as witnesses to the fact, in which God's children believe, that Jesus is the Son of God (ver. 5). Meanwhile, the whole passage in which this parenthesis occurs bears upon the absolute sufficiency of faith as the means of salvation. It is the power of faith of which the apostle is speaking when he introduces the witness of the water and blood to the object of faith. And at the close of the parenthesis it is the all-sufficiency of faith to which he returns. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness within himself" (ver. 10). And "these things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God" (ver. 13).[1]

This concludes our survey of the evidence presented by the New Testament generally (the evidence of Paul being meanwhile reserved) as to the significance that was attached to baptism in the apostolic age. We have seen that it was the invariable accompaniment of a profession of faith, that it was the rite of initiation into the community of Christ's disciples, that it was regarded as a figure of the cleansing of the soul, and as the means of

[1] It is hardly possible to draw any conclusions in favour of sacramentarian views from the fact that the water and the blood are associated with the Spirit in this work of witness-bearing, as if the power of witnessing for Christ belonged to the sacraments in a manner that is absolutely unique. The idea of witness is one of the dominant ideas in the Johannine writings, whether we find it on the lips of Jesus or in the utterances of the writer himself. John the Baptist (John i. 7), the Old Testament Scriptures (John v. 39), Christ's own works (John v. 36, x. 25), His disciples (John xv. 27), faith as a power of inward assurance (1 John v. 10), are all described as taking part in that work of witnessing of which the Spirit Himself is the supreme agent (1 John v. 6).

a subjective assurance of the forgiving grace of God in Christ. And all this does not carry us beyond the sphere of ideas suggested by the original institution of Jesus. The authority of the rite came from its appointment by the Lord Himself; its striking symbolism peculiarly fitted it to be bound up with the proclamation of the gospel of forgiveness; its immediate association with the experiences of the new birth imparted to it the suggestiveness and impressiveness that belong to actions in which the greatest moments of life arrive at their definite expression. But there is nothing to justify the idea that in baptism itself there inheres some mysterious and magical efficacy, nothing to entitle us to say that it was regarded by the apostles and the primitive Church as the primary moment of salvation, or even as an essential channel for the conveyance of the divine grace.

LECTURE IV.

The Pauline Doctrine of Baptism.

In our study of the Pauline doctrine of baptism, as of the general apostolic doctrine, it is most convenient to begin by an examination of the evidence of Acts. It is true, no doubt, that for immediacy of testimony as to Paul's thoughts about Christ and Christianity, the Pauline Epistles are our fundamental authorities, and in comparison with these Acts occupies only a secondary position. But it is a commonplace of New Testament theology, that Paul's doctrine of Christ and Christianity was the unfolding to others of his own personal experience in contact with the great Christian facts, and especially of those initial experiences of his conversion which were the determinants of his whole subsequent history. Now, it is in Acts that the story of his conversion is told us; twice, moreover, in reports of speeches by the apostle himself. And so these historical accounts of his conversion, checked, of course, by his own casual references to the subject in his Epistles, furnish us with a key to his whole doctrinal teaching. Further, we have in Acts an account of his early missionary preaching before any of his Epistles were written. And so, if we are to give a genetic and historical account of his doctrine of baptism, the natural plan is to begin with the book in which we find the story of his own conversion and baptism, and of his teaching and practice with respect to the sacrament during the earlier years of his missionary career.

I. Of Paul's conversion Luke gives us no fewer than three distinct accounts, one in the ordinary course of his narrative, and the other two in reports of speeches which were delivered by the apostle on different occasions (ix. 3–19, xxii. 6–16, xxvi. 12–20). And when these three accounts are read and compared, no one can deny that it is difficult to harmonise them. Critics who discriminate among the narratives with respect to originality and reliability, usually give the preference to the speech before Agrippa in chapter xxvi., in which no mention whatever is made either of Ananias or of Paul's baptism; while they regard the accounts in chapters ix. and xxii. as having been constructed by a combination of that speech with an early tradition regarding Ananias.[1] Well, it is true, no doubt, that Luke, like any other good historian, depended upon materials which varied in value. And if we could sort out his materials, and refer each separate statement to its particular source, we might be helped to a solution of some of the difficulties occasioned by the threefold account. But the attempts that have been made at a discrimination of this kind have been too purely fanciful to lead to any satisfactory results, as is shown by the hopeless variations in the schemes of different analysts. And in default of any real knowledge upon these points, our only safe plan for doctrinal purposes is to treat the three narratives on an equal level, and to regard the briefer account in chapter xxvi. as a summarised form of the story which has been given twice before. Even so, however, we still have to study these three narratives comparatively, with the view of finding out, if possible, where the chief emphasis falls. For our present study, the point of importance lies in the varying degrees of significance that are assigned to the apostle's baptism. What has to be ascertained is whether it was by his experiences

[1] See McGiffert, *History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*, pp. 120, 350.

on the Damascus road that Paul was transformed into a Christian man, or whether his sins were not forgiven, nor did the Holy Spirit enter into his heart, until Ananias had baptized him. And if Paul was nothing less than a regenerated man before he was baptized, we have to discover what special significance is to be attached to the rite that was performed upon him by the humble disciple of Damascus.

Now, it is surely not without some bearing upon the problem, that while in all the three accounts Paul's conversion on the way to Damascus is fully narrated, it is only in two of them that his subsequent baptism is referred to. In his speech before Agrippa the apostle makes no mention of any interview with Ananias, but refers the whole decisive change in his life to his vision of the risen Lord and the call and commission which he then received. If this is a summarised narrative, it is a summary which suggests that Paul's intercourse with Ananias did not form an essential part of that story of his transformation from a bitter persecutor of Christianity into a preacher of Jesus Christ which he set himself to tell the king; and so it suggests that, whatever significance he attached to his baptism, he did not regard it as the most vital part of his extraordinary experience.[1]

And this view of the point where the emphasis lies in these narratives of Acts is immensely strengthened by

[1] Knowling (*Expositor's Greek Testament, in loco*) quotes with approval the remark of Blass, "tota persona Ananiæ sublata est, quippe quæ non esset apta apud hos auditores." But such a remark really weakens the case for the high view of baptism that Knowling takes, and contrasts rather strangely with his comments on ix. 18 and xxii. 16. For it amounts to saying that the apostle regarded his baptism as no necessary part of the story of how he became a Christian, but a matter which might be mentioned or dropped, according to his audience, without affecting the essential result. It must be remembered, too, that Agrippa, to whom and not to Festus Paul really addresses himself throughout, was a well-instructed Jew, and quite as "apt" an auditor for the story of Paul's intercourse with Ananias as the excited crowd that surged around the stairs of the Castle of Antonia. Cf. xxvi. 2, 3.

Paul's autobiographical references in his Epistles to the great transition by which he passed from death to life. He attributes nothing to the mediation of Ananias or any one else, but everything to the agency of the risen Lord whom he met on the way to Damascus.[1] This is conspicuously the case in the first chapter of Galatians, where Paul maintains that his apostleship and his whole standing in grace was effected by the immediate interposition and sole agency of Jesus Christ. He was "an apostle, not from men, neither through man, but from Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead" (ver. 1). His gospel was not received from a man, neither was he taught it, but it came to him through revelation of Jesus Christ (ver. 12). And the antithesis plainly implies, as Knowling remarks,[2] that Jesus was the author of this revelation as well as the object of it. And if it be said that in the first chapter of Galatians Paul is speaking of his being "made an apostle" rather than of his becoming a Christian, the answer is that Paul is quite evidently speaking of both, but that, in any case, he could not be made an apostle before he became a Christian. To suppose that he was appointed to his apostleship while his sins were yet unforgiven, and before the Holy Ghost had entered into his heart, is to suppose an absurdity; while, on the other hand, to argue that he could not be made an apostle before he had received the rite of baptism, is to forget that none of the other apostles, as we have seen already, had received Christian baptism at all.

In this connection it is worth noticing that in the commission to the Gentiles which Paul, in his speech

[1] Cf. Galat. i. *passim;* 1 Cor. xv. 8; Phil. iii. 12. The passages about baptism in Rom. vi. 3–5 and Tit. iii. 5–7, in which the plural pronoun "we" is used, are not autobiographical, in the strict sense of the word, like the passages just referred to.

[2] *Witness of the Epistles*, p. 379. That Paul is referring here not to a mere inward experience, but to the event that is so fully related in Acts, is made plain in verse 17, where he speaks about his return to Damascus.

before Agrippa, declares himself to have received from the Lord on the way to Damascus, baptism forms no part of the saving message with which he was sent forth to evangelise the world. As the commission runs, it is simply by faith in Jesus Christ that men are to receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified (xxvi. 18).[1] Now, we cannot but associate this gospel which he was sent to preach with his own statement in the first chapter of Galatians, "It pleased God who . . . called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles" (Galat. i. 15, 16). Evidently the gospel he was sent to preach was identical with the revelation of Christ which came to himself. And if Paul describes the former as consisting in this, that remission of sins and an inheritance among the sanctified are to be received by faith, it would follow that this was the revelation which flashed into his own heart on that day when the light of the knowledge of the glory of God was given him in the very face of Jesus Christ.

We pass now to what is said in chapters ix. and xxii. about the visit of Ananias and the baptism of Paul. In the ninth chapter, Ananias, as the result of a vision, comes to Saul in his blindness, and, laying his hands upon him, says, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me that thou mayest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost" (ver. 17). And immediately, we are told, Saul received his sight, and he arose and was baptized (ver. 18).

Now, this passage is very frequently quoted as if it undoubtedly taught that Paul received the Holy Ghost

[1] There can be little doubt that τῇ πίστει is to be connected, in spite of the punctuation of both the A.V. and R.V., which have followed the Vulgate, with λαβεῖν and not with ἡγιασμένοις. So Meyer, Alford, Holtzmann, Knowling, etc.

through the medium of baptism.[1] In reality it rather suggests that the spiritual gift which Paul received came in connection with the laying-on of the hands of Ananias, and that his baptism, as in the case of Cornelius, followed afterwards, not as the medium of any saving grace, but as the symbol and seal of spiritual facts that were already accomplished. As regards the imposition of hands, moreover, the narrative shows that it was not any peculiar apostolic prerogative employed only as the consequent of baptism, but that it might precede baptism, that it might be connected as much with recovery from a physical ailment as with the reception of a spiritual grace, and that the use of it was not confined to any one order of the disciples.[2] And when Ananias says that he has come that Paul may be filled with the Holy Ghost, we can hardly understand this to mean that Paul had not received the Holy Ghost already. To draw such a conclusion is to contradict what Paul himself tells us as to what took place on the way to Damascus; and further, it is not the meaning which the words naturally suggest. For if we are to judge from the analogy of the general usage of the New Testament, "to be filled with the Holy Ghost" is by no means the same thing as simply to receive the Holy Ghost. When we read of the first disciples that they were all filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts ii. 4), we must remember that, according to the testimony of John's Gospel, the risen Jesus had already breathed upon these same disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John xx. 22). Their being filled with the Spirit means that they received the Spirit in special and extraordinary measure, as was immediately made manifest by the gifts of prophecy and tongues. When we read of a company of Christians, at a time subsequent to Pentecost, that after

[1] So even Knowling, *Expositor's Greek Testament, in loco.*

[2] Cf. Acts xiii. 1–3.

they had prayed "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness" (iv. 31), it is self-evident that this filling with the Holy Ghost was a special accession of spiritual strength in the case of men who possessed the essential spiritual gift already. Similarly, when the Twelve requested the multitude of the disciples to choose seven men to attend to the daily ministration who should be "men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (vi. 3), that does not mean that they were to be Christian men as contrasted with unbelievers, but that they were to be conspicuous in the general community of Christians through the possession of special spiritual endowments. And once more, when Stephen in one place and Barnabas in another are described as men "full of the Holy Ghost" (vi. 5, xi. 24), the phrase is evidently used to distinguish them from the average mass of Christians, as men upon whom the Spirit had been bestowed in a peculiar degree. In the present case also, it is natural to suppose, this filling with the Spirit of which Ananias spoke was not regeneration or the essential gift of spiritual life, but the bestowal of spiritual grace and power in those larger measures which made Paul, like Stephen before him and Barnabas after, a man "full of the Holy Ghost."

When we pass now to the twenty-second chapter, we find Paul reported as saying that Ananias at the end of the interview used these words, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (xxii. 16).

These words are quite commonly quoted as a stronghold of High Church doctrine. And no doubt they might be "patient" of such an interpretation, to use an expression of Newman's, if they could be divorced altogether from the general teaching of Acts. But as we do not find elsewhere in the book anything to justify the idea that

baptism is equivalent to the washing away of sin, we may remind ourselves of a line of argument laid down by Turretine, and adopted by Principal Cunningham in his *Historical Theology*. Dr. Cunningham says, in effect, that where there is a preponderating mass of Scriptural evidence, both in general principles and in specific statements, sufficient to require us to maintain a certain position, we are authorised, in considering any proofs that are adduced upon the other side, to direct our attention to the special point of showing that they do not *necessarily require* the construction which it is sought to give them.[1] In the present case the preponderating mass of evidence in the Book of Acts is certainly unfavourable to the ritualistic construction. And it is certain also that such a construction is not necessarily required by the words before us. The very context shows this, for before exhorting Paul to be baptized, Ananias has declared, "The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know His will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from His mouth. For thou shalt be a witness for Him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard" (vers. 14, 15). This was not the announcement of a future appointment, but the declaration of one that had already been made. Three days previously Paul had seen the Righteous One, and heard the voice from His mouth, and received and accepted His call to the apostolate (xxvi. 17–19). And so these words of Ananias are no more than a reaffirmation from human lips of the commission which Paul had already received from the exalted Christ Himself. But if Paul was already an apostle in virtue of his heavenly vision and heavenly call (Acts xxvi. 19; Gal. i. 1), how can it be questioned that he had received before this that fundamental gift of the remission of sins which belongs to the humblest Christian man?

[1] *Historical Theology*, vol. ii. p. 135.

What does Ananias mean, then, by the exhortation, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins"? We set aside at once as altogether untenable the interpretation that regards the second imperative as quite distinct from the first, and as summoning Paul to a life of moral self-improvement subsequent to his baptism. The meaning of the verb *ἀπολούω* and its history in the Septuagint and in the New Testament[1] demand that it should be taken in the closest relation with the preceding *βαπτίζω*. Nor does it seem sufficient to say that Ananias is speaking not of a real washing, but simply of a formal washing imparted in the sacrament. His words certainly suggest that something real was offered, and the question is as to the nature of the reality. It cannot have consisted in the objective bestowal of the divine forgiveness, for Paul, as we have seen, possessed that gift already; and so it remains that it was something in the region of subjective experience of which Ananias spoke. Paul was forgiven, and knew that he was forgiven; but he lacked in its completeness "the sweet sense of forgiven sin," to use a phrase that we have often heard on the lips of a departed saint. And in circumstances like his, baptism into the fellowship of the Church has a wonderful power to wash away the sense of sin, and to bring peace and comfort into a penitent heart.

It is here that we may find a suggestion as to the force of the middle voice in the two imperatives *βάπτισαι* and *ἀπόλουσαι*, about which so much has been written. The verbs are certainly not to be regarded as simply equivalent to two passives; nor, on the other hand, are they to be understood as if they pointed to an ethical self-purification, a personal laying aside of sin. But they do suggest that Paul was to do something for himself, and not merely to receive something passively from without. His sins were

[1] See Cremer, *sub verbo*.

forgiven; but he needed to admit this truth fully into his consciousness, and that was no easy matter for one with a conscience like Paul's, one who, to the very end of his days, could never forget the appalling fact of his guilt as the persecutor of Jesus and His Church. How that face which had flashed suddenly upon him near the walls of Damascus, with its mingled look of love and reproach, must have burned upon his inward sight during those three days of blindness; and how, in the silence, that never-to-be-forgotten voice must have stabbed his heart again and again as it seemed to repeat the words, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest!" But Ananias came and called him "Brother Saul," and laid his hands upon that bowed head; and this brought to Christ's new apostle the gracious gift of brotherly love, and the comfortable assurance that he was fully forgiven by the Church which he had wronged so deeply, and had meant to wrong more deeply still. And then Ananias exhorted him, having called upon the name of the Lord, to arise and "get himself baptized," that so in the use of this ordinance which the Lord had appointed, and which symbolised the remission of sins, he might grasp, as it were, the outstretched hand of the exalted Jesus, and might be confidently assured that his sins were indeed freely forgiven him, alike on earth and in heaven.

Passing now from Paul's own conversion and baptism, let us seek to gather the testimony of Acts as to the place held by baptism in his subsequent preaching and practice. In the commission which he received on the way to Damascus, Paul was told, as we have seen, that he was to go forth and preach that remission of sins and an inheritance among the sanctified were to be obtained through faith in Jesus Christ. In the first of his sermons of which we have any report, that delivered in the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch, we find him saying, "Be it

known unto you therefore, brethren, that through this man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins, and by Him every one that believeth is justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (xiii. 38, 39). And throughout Paul's missionary journeys baptism is never mentioned by the historian in any of the general phrases that he uses to describe the missionary work which was carried on by the apostle and his associates. We read that "they preached the word," "they preached the gospel," "Paul testified both to Jews and Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ"; but we never find it said in any of the summarised descriptions of evangelising activity which occur from time to time, that "they baptized."[1] It is true that we are told of certain cases in which baptism was administered, and it is equally true that we have no reason to doubt that in every case of conversion under Paul's preaching, profession of faith would be accompanied by the administration of the rite. But the comparative silence of the history as to baptism, and its constant emphasis upon faith in the word preached, compels us again to conclude that faith and not baptism was always presented as the thing of essential moment.[2] And this argument from the infrequency of the mention of baptism is confirmed, as we shall now see, by the manner of mention in the few cases in which mention is made.

There are altogether four occasions in the Book of Acts on which we read of baptism being employed in connection with Paul's missionary work. The first is the case of Lydia

[1] Cf. xiii. 5, 46, xiv. 7, 21, 25, xv. 35, 36, xvi. 6, 10, xvii. 13, xix. 18, xx. 21, xxvi. 20, xxviii. 31. This phraseology, like the explanation given of the joy of the Philippian jailor (xvi. 34), and the silence observed on the question whether baptism into the name of Jesus Christ was necessary in the case of Apollos (*vide infra*), may be regarded as furnishing "contemporary notes" which testify to the doctrinal attitude not only of Paul but of his historian.

[2] Cf. xiii. 48, xiv. 1, 23, 27, xvii. 4, 11, 12, xviii. 27, xix. 18.

at Philippi (xvi. 14, 15). We are told that the Lord opened her heart to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul. Then, in the most incidental manner, it is stated that she and her household were baptized. But when, after her baptism, she entreats Paul and his companions to honour her by becoming her guests, she does not appeal to them on the ground of now being a baptized person, and therefore a Christian, but on the sole ground that she was now "a believer in the Lord" (*πιστὴν τῷ κυρίῳ*).

Still more significant is the case of the Philippian jailor (xvi. 30–34). His cry for direction as to the way of salvation was answered with the simple injunction, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." If ever there was occasion for prescribing baptism plainly as the means of salvation, had Paul believed this to be the true significance of the rite, it was when that anxious cry for guidance rose from the lips of this trembling suppliant. But of baptism as a rite on which his salvation depended, Paul has not a word to tell him. And when, like all others who professed their faith in Christ, the jailor and his household had been baptized, the great joy that filled his heart is not attributed to his baptism—as if in that there lay the ground of his new standing in grace; but "he rejoiced greatly," we read, "with all his house, having believed in God."

The third case, which carries us to Corinth, calls for no discussion. "Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized" (xviii. 8). This statement affords another proof that the confession of faith was invariably followed by baptism, but it implies nothing further. It is interesting chiefly because we learn from 1 Corinthians (i. 16) that Paul baptized this man Crispus and his household with his own hands, thus breaking

through his general rule of abstaining from personal administration of the rite.

One other case remains, that of the twelve Ephesian disciples (xix. 1–7). To understand this incident, however, we must consider it in connection with the so far parallel case of Apollos in the immediately preceding paragraph (xviii. 24–28). Now, each of these narratives presents its own difficulties; and when the two are compared the difficulties are increased still further. Here, if anywhere in Acts, source-criticism has its opportunity, which it has not failed to endeavour to improve. Dr. Moffatt, indeed, tells us, with regard to the Apollos passage, that it is only through some use of source-criticism that we can attain to "a lucid and intelligible idea of the contents."[1] And of the passage about the Ephesian disciples even so conservative a writer as Professor W. M. Ramsay says that he entirely fails to understand it, and confesses that if there were any authority in MS. or ancient version, he would be inclined to drop it out of the text altogether.[2] But there is no documentary justification, as Professor Ramsay admits, for dealing so drastically with the incident of the disciples at Ephesus. And while source-criticism might be helpful to us in seeking to get at the exact truth regarding Apollos, if it had anything like sure or even consistent results to offer, it can hardly be said that the quite contrary solutions of typical critics like Spitta, Schmiedel, and McGiffert make the matter more lucid and intelligible than the text as it stands. If the narrative is "confused," the solutions are certainly confusing.

With respect to Apollos, it is noteworthy that, though he had not previously received Christian baptism, he is not said to have been rebaptized after Priscilla and Aquila had "expounded unto him the way of God more carefully." A

[1] *The Historical New Testament*, p. 674.
[2] *St. Paul the Traveller*, p. 270.

good many commentators infer that, as a matter of course, he would be rebaptized, while others, like Meyer, take precisely the opposite view. But whatever we may think as to the probabilities of the case, the point we are concerned with is that the narrative is entirely silent upon the subject. Now, in many cases it may be quite legitimate to say that baptism is not mentioned because it is assumed as self-evident, but in a case like this it is hardly open to us to do so. The very fact that the best commentators are divided on the question whether, as a matter of fact, Apollos was rebaptized or not, is proof of this. At all events, the sufficiency or insufficiency of such an argument depends upon what we suppose baptism to have carried with it in the intention of the apostolic Church. If in its inmost essence it was no more than the sacrament of the public confession of faith in Christ, and so of union with the visible Church, there is nothing very strange in its not being mentioned, even in the case of Apollos. But if baptism was the sacramental medium of regeneration, if the first impartation of the Holy Ghost was necessarily bound up with the application of the water, it is strange indeed that we are not told whether it was administered to Apollos or not. For this was a quite peculiar case, the case of a man who, so far, believed in Christ, nay, who had even been preaching Christ; and who, notwithstanding, knew of no baptism except that of John. It is not easy to see how a historian who believed that Christian baptism was the very means of regeneration could maintain, in the first test case that his history brings up, the case too of a man who rose to great distinction in the early Church, a complete silence on the point whether or not one who knew only the baptism of John needed to be baptized into the name of Christ.

Coming now to the next chapter, with which we are more immediately concerned, we read that Paul, on coming

to Ephesus, found there certain disciples. That these men, just like Apollos before he met Priscilla and Aquila, were in a sense Christians already, the narrative implies when it describes them as disciples. To these disciples, then, Paul addressed the question, "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?" And here he strikes the key-note of the whole incident by connecting the gift of the Holy Ghost, not with baptism but with believing. The men replied, "Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was given"; for this, and not "whether there be any Holy Ghost," is certainly the right translation.[1] "Into what, then," asked Paul, "were ye baptized?"

We constantly find it assumed by writers of a certain school that this question of the apostle's presupposes that if these men had received Christian baptism, they would have received the Spirit in the very act. The assumption is far from being a natural one, especially in view of the fact that he had just inquired, "Did ye receive the Spirit when ye believed?" The truth seems rather to be that the answer Paul got to his first question made it plain that these men had never yet heard of the wonderful gifts of Pentecost, and so were still standing in this respect where John the Baptist had stood. He must have heard from his friends Aquila and Priscilla, on his arrival in Ephesus, of the case of Apollos, and he would at once suspect, from their answer to his first question, that these twelve disciples also had received no other baptism than that of John. Hence, when he put the further question, "Into what, then, were ye baptized?" he was really anticipating the reply, "Into John's baptism."[2] And if he already surmised as

[1] So Meyer, Westcott, Holtzmann, and many others. That ἔστι is here to be taken in the sense of "adest" is supported by the analogy of John vii. 39, οὔπω γὰρ ἦν πνεῦμα. John certainly does not mean that the Spirit was non-existent.

[2] Knowling (*Expositor's Greek Testament, in loco*) remarks on εἰς τί οὖν ἐβαπτίσθητε, "οὖν presupposes that if they had been baptized into the name of

much, it is far more probable that his question simply meant, "What was the nature of your baptism?" than that it was intended to convey, by means of a subtle implication, that Christian baptism carries with it the communication of the Holy Ghost.

When Paul heard that the baptism they had received was no other than the baptism of John, he said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on Him which should come after, that is, on Jesus." And here, again, it must be noticed that these words do not draw a contrast between John's baptism as the baptism of repentance and Christian baptism as the conveyance of the Holy Spirit. The antithesis is between the baptism of water unto repentance, and faith in Christ who alone can baptize with the Holy Ghost. These men had been baptized with the baptism of repentance, and now Paul tells them that they must believe in Jesus, not only with that pre-Pentecostal faith which they already possessed, but with the faith of those who knew that the gift of the Spirit foretold by John had now been bestowed. From first to last, then, it is faith about which Paul is concerned, and it is faith which he points to as the means by which the Spirit is to be received. "Did ye receive the Spirit when ye believed?" is his first question; and his last word is to remind these disciples of John that John himself, as he baptized the people unto repentance, had proclaimed that for the baptism of the Holy Ghost they must look in faith to that Coming One who was no other than the Lord Jesus Christ. And so when these Ephesian disciples were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus, we have no

Jesus they would have received the Spirit at baptism." But this is to make οὖν presuppose a good deal too much. As a matter of fact, οὖν is not equivalent to the purely illative ἄρα, and does not necessarily mean anything more than our word "then," the word by which, in similar constructions to the present, where a question is asked, it is almost invariably rendered in the New Testament. It is used simply to mark a transition, or to subjoin a question suggested by what has been previously said. Cf. Rom. iii. 27, iv. 1, 9, 10, xi. 11; 1 Cor. iii. 5, etc.

reason to suppose that the Holy Ghost was conveyed to them by means of the rite. Certainly, nothing is said here to imply this. The spiritual gifts of which we read in the passage were charismatic gifts, and are connected not with baptism, but with the laying-on of Paul's hands. Everything, therefore, points to the conclusion that here, as elsewhere, baptism was no magical means of grace, but the rite in which faith was professed, the grace of Christ symbolised, and admission given into the visible fellowship of His disciples.

II. This exhausts the evidence of Acts as to the Pauline doctrine of baptism; and we now pass to the immediate evidence of Paul's own writings. At this stage something must be said as to the use that we shall make of the Epistles that come to us in Paul's name. The four great Epistles—Romans, Galatians, and 1 and 2 Corinthians—may be regarded as beyond the region of serious controversy.[1] 1 and 2 Thessalonians also, which Baur confidently pronounced to be non-Pauline, and to belong probably to the fourth decade of the second century, are now freely admitted, even by advanced critics, to be authentically Pauline, and the very earliest extant productions of the apostle's pen.[2] The tide of recent criticism, too, has more and more turned in favour of the genuineness of all the Epistles of the imprisonment, not Philippians only but Colossians and Philemon, and even the much-disputed Ephesians itself.[3] Of the Pastoral Epistles, it

[1] No notice need be taken of the recent attempts of certain of the younger Dutch critics to attribute the whole of the Pauline Epistles to later hands. Neither by German nor English-speaking scholars have these critical vagaries been taken seriously.

[2] See Harnack, *Chronologie der Altchristlichen Litteratur*, p. 239. Holtzmann accepts the First Epistle, and admits that the Second was very probably written by Paul shortly after the First. See his *Einleitung*, p. 212 ff.

[3] Of this group of Epistles, Ephesians is the one that is most debated: but the admission of the authenticity of Colossians has made the case against it much more difficult to maintain. See Zahn, *Einleitung*, i. 353 ff.; Harnack, *Chronologie*, p. 239.

must be admitted, the same thing cannot be said. But when we find Harnack recognising the presence in this group of genuine Pauline notes, and when we keep in mind the course taken by the criticism of the Pauline literature during the last generation, it would be somewhat rash to imagine that we must resign ourselves finally to the conclusion that in the Pastorals we have nothing better than a few genuine Pauline elements embedded in a loose mass of secondary deposits. But as there is only one passage in the whole group in which baptism is referred to, and as the interpretation of this particular passage, and the question of the origin of the Pastorals as a whole, are closely related to each other, discussion of this latter point may suitably be deferred until we come to consider the passage in question.

1. Dealing first with the Thessalonian Epistles, which are the earliest of all, we notice how closely they are connected in the style of their teaching with the missionary preaching of Paul as recorded in Acts.[1] And the conclusions to which we have already been led by our study of Acts as to the place which Paul assigned in his preaching to the doctrine of baptism, are quite confirmed by the evidence of these two letters. For neither in the one nor the other is baptism ever mentioned, or even in any apparent manner alluded to. It cannot fairly be said that this silence has no bearing upon our endeavour to discover Paul's views on the subject of the sacrament. For it would certainly be strange that he should make no reference to it if he regarded it as a matter of primary moment for salvation, and if, during his stay at Thessalonica, he had taught his converts so to regard it also. Nor can it be affirmed that his silence is to be accounted for on the

[1] This point was emphasised by Baur himself, though he drew the false conclusion that the author was imitating the style of the narrative of Acts, and so made it an argument for his second-century date.

ground that he had no suitable occasion to mention the rite. On the contrary, he had both a practical and a doctrinal occasion of a very evident kind. The practical occasion lay in the anxiety of his correspondents regarding their Christian friends who had died before the Lord's expected coming. If Paul believed that baptism was the means of that personal union with the risen and living Christ on which our hopes for our departed Christian friends are built, it is remarkable that he does not now refer to this as a sure ground of consolation. There can be no doubt that the ritualistic view, to those who accept it, offers a very definite point of attachment for hope to cling to in thinking about the state of the departed. Every one knows the tremendous power exercised over men's minds in later times by the idea that the baptized dead are saved, while the unbaptized dead are lost. It may be said that Paul, in speaking of "the dead in Christ," and of those who are "fallen asleep in Jesus" (1 Thess. iv. 14, 16), assumes the fact that those dead Christians had been baptized. No doubt he does. But the question is, whether Paul means the Thessalonians to understand that it was in the fact of baptism that there lay the secret of the union of those departed Christians with the Risen Lord. If he does, it is strange, we say again, that he makes no reference to a doctrine so apposite to his purpose of conveying to those mourners some words with which they may "comfort one another." At all events, the fact remains that faith is frequently spoken of in the course of these two Epistles as the ground of salvation, while baptism is nowhere alluded to.

And this brings us to the second or doctrinal occasion which the apostle had for referring to baptism, had he regarded it as the medium of regeneration. We cannot but notice that he has much to say in both letters about the Christian gospel, which he variously describes as "the gospel of God," "the gospel of Christ," "our gospel,"

according as he is thinking of its ultimate source, its special author and subject, or his own relation to it as a Christian preacher. But in spite of these frequent references to the gospel, by which he certainly means a message of salvation (1 Thess. ii. 16), he never suggests that a doctrine of baptism formed any part of it. On the contrary, he makes his gospel identical with "the word" (1 Thess. i. 6) or "the word of the Lord" (1 Thess. i. 8), and the receiving or accepting of this word, again, the ground of the acknowledged Christianity of his converts (1 Thess. i. 6, ii. 13). Indeed, we may remark at this point that in none of his Epistles does Paul ever connect the idea of baptism with the use of the words *εὐαγγέλιον*, *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*, as if any part of the essential gospel of salvation lay in the administration of the rite. The only place in all his writings in which the two subjects, baptism and the gospel, are mentioned in close succession, is that passage in 1 Corinthians in which he expressly contrasts the proclamation of the gospel and the administration of the ordinance, by saying that God sent him not to baptize but to preach the gospel (1 Cor. i. 17). And as it is the word of the gospel that brings salvation to men, so it is faith that enables them to appropriate the saving grace of God. Paul shows this not only by designating Christians as believers (1 Thess. i. 7, ii. 10), but by the statement that the word of the Lord "energises in you that believe" (1 Thess. ii. 13), and by connecting belief of the truth with the sanctification wrought by the Spirit, as the means of the salvation to which his hearers are called through the gospel (2 Thess. ii. 13).[1]

[1] It may be said, no doubt, that Paul does not here mention the doctrine of justification by faith any more than the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and does not even speak of the atoning work of Christ. But while anything like a complete doctrine either of justification or of the atonement is wanting, the fact of salvation by faith and through Christ is made perfectly clear. On the other hand, in the case of baptism, what has to be noticed is not merely the absence of any theory as to the way in which baptism is related to salvation, but the total absence of any reference to the ordinance at all.

An examination, therefore, of these two earliest Epistles, which are so closely related to Paul's missionary activity, points to the conclusion that at the time when they were written baptism was not a part of what he distinctively calls his gospel, and cannot accordingly have been regarded by him as in essence anything more than the divinely appointed way of making confession of Christ's name and being admitted to the fellowship of His people.

2. We come next to the Epistle to the Galatians, the first in chronological order of the four great Epistles. It contains only one reference to baptism, introduced moreover somewhat parenthetically, but great importance has always been attached to it by those who hold to a theory of baptismal regeneration. The reference is found towards the close of the third chapter, which from beginning to end is a sustained exposition of the power of faith to secure not justification only, but all the blessings of the Christian salvation. The apostle has just said in verse 26, "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus," and now he adds in verse 27, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ."

Now, between these two statements there is an evident parallelism, as every one admits. And it is commonly admitted, further, that the putting on of Christ in verse 27 is the exact counterpart of the being sons of God in verse 26. But the point that has to be settled is the relation between the faith that makes us sons of God and the baptism in which we put on Christ. Sometimes it is assumed that the γάρ which introduces verse 27 implies that there is a precise causal relation between the two verses, and that baptism is thus indicated as the *prius* of faith, and so the fundamental means of salvation. Baptism, it is argued, unites us with Christ, while the function of faith is simply to accept this fact and rest

upon it.[1] But it is by no means the case that γάρ necessarily implies a causal relation.[2] All that can justly be said from the grammatical point of view is that the sentence which it introduces is of an explanatory kind. Besides, every reader of the New Testament knows that in the preaching and teaching of the apostles, faith is invariably demanded as the condition and ground of baptism. This, of course, has to be admitted even by the ritualistic writers just referred to; but they immediately attempt to qualify the admission by making a distinction between two kinds of faith, a faith that precedes baptism and a faith that follows it, and by affirming that the antecedent kind of faith can do no more than desire salvation, while only the faith that follows after baptism and rests upon it is justifying faith. This peculiar distinction, however, is one for which there is not the slightest exegetical authority; and it appears to be simply an expedient adopted to meet a difficulty which besets all theories of baptismal regeneration — the difficulty of equating the baptism of infants with the baptism of believers.

So far, therefore, as syntax goes, it is perfectly legitimate to hold that the order in which the two verses occur is the logical order, and the order of relative importance. "Ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus"; that is the primary fact. And when Paul adds, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ," he appears to be only reminding the Galatians that since baptism is the confession and outward consummation of faith, all who in faith have been baptized into Christ have thereby put on Christ. This, we say, is a meaning which the syntax perfectly admits. And that this, or something like it, is the true meaning, the whole evidence of the Epistle goes to show. For while baptism is mentioned only once

[1] Newman, *Lect. on Justification*, p. 257. Althaus, *Heilsbedeut. d. Taufe*, p. 314.
[2] See Winer and Grimm-Thayer, *sub verbo*.

in the course of it, faith is constantly alleged as the sole and sufficient means of salvation—the ground not only of justification (Gal. ii. 16, iii. 8, 11), but of personal union with Christ (ii. 20), of the communication of the Spirit (iii. 2, 5, 14), and of adoption into the family of God (iii. 26). And if, in spite of this position of constant paramountcy assigned to faith, and this solitary and parenthetic mention of baptism, it is assumed that the Galatians would understand Paul to mean that baptism was, after all, the fundamental means of salvation, this assumption must be built on the supposition that in his original preaching among them he had given to the doctrine of baptism a place of prominence which it does not receive in his Epistle. But this, again, is not borne out by what we find in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Acts, in which, according to the now generally accepted view, we have some account of Paul's Galatian preaching.[1] The testimony of Paul and Barnabas, both in Lystra and Derbe, is summed up as a "preaching of the gospel" (Acts xiv. 7, 21). And that is the very phrase which Paul uses repeatedly in this Epistle when he recalls the nature of the work he had done among the Galatians; while he describes the truth of the gospel he had preached as consisting essentially in this, "that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but only (ἐὰν μή; cf. R.V. margin) through faith in Jesus Christ" (ii. 14, 16). And this description of the essential content of the gospel that he preached exactly bears out the report we have in Acts of his sermon in the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch, for there he brings his discourse to its doctrinal climax by

[1] The South Galatian theory, thanks very largely to Professor W. M. Ramsay, commends itself more and more to students of the N.T. in Germany as well as in this country (cf. Zahn, *Einleitung*, i. 130); though Professor Vernon Bartlet perhaps puts the case a little too confidently when he speaks of "the now victorious South Galatian theory" (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, 10th edit., xxv. 60). Certainly, Ramsay's views are strongly confirmed by a comparison of Galatians with Acts xii. and xiv.

saying, "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

When we come finally to the context of our passage, we find that the whole chapter in which the reference to baptism occurs is an exposition of the powers that belong to faith. It is faith that justifies, it is faith that secures the blessings of the Spirit, it is faith that makes us sons of God and heirs to all the promises. And so when Paul, after once more reaffirming this wonderful potency of faith by saying, "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus," adds, "for as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ," it seems only natural to understand that he is employing the baptism of verse 27 simply as the representative of the faith of verse 26. As Teichmann justly remarks, Paul might quite as well have said, "Ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus; for in the very fact of believing in Christ you put on Christ." By bringing in baptism he introduces no essentially new moment into the succession of his thought. "What is expressed by means of it, namely, that one through it is united to Christ, has already been shown to be mediated through faith." [1] Baptism, then, as here introduced, is not anything specifically different from faith, but the effect of the latter is simply carried over to the former. As Pfleiderer puts it, baptism is related to faith "as the phenomenal form to the spiritual substance." And he adds, "For the very reason that baptism is the externally completed entrance into the connection with Christ by faith, it may be considered as the ground of recognition of that existing communion with Christ the real ground of which is faith." [2]

[1] *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 6er Jahrgang, Heft iv. p. 361.
[2] *Paulinism*, vol. i. p. 198 f.

But if this is Paul's true meaning, why, it may be asked, does he introduce this reference to baptism at all? The reference, as has been said, is parenthetical, and yet doubtless it is perfectly deliberate. Nor does it suffice to say that as the apostle has had occasion to speak of faith or of believing no fewer than seven times in the course of the preceding five verses, he is here only varying the form of his literary expression. For even though the introduction of the idea of baptism does not add anything to the essential thought of the passage, it does set that thought in fresh and suggestive lights. Baptism was not only the culminating point and outward expression of faith, it was to the convert of those early days, and especially to the Gentile convert, a psychological moment of the deepest significance, a great turning-point in his life when he definitely broke away from the old sphere of thought and conduct in which he had hitherto moved, and attached himself to the new sphere of Christianity. As an act of confession on the one side, and a welcome into the Christian brotherhood on the other, it bore within it a wonderful faculty of strengthening faith and quickening the sense of the divine forgiveness, and for this very reason it was frequently accompanied by a marked accession of spiritual life and power. Moreover, as Teichmann again reminds us, it was a moment to which the thought of a Christian would constantly return, because it could be vividly reproduced in memory, while the earlier experiences of conversion would sometimes be gradual and in part sub-conscious. Hence "it is psychologically correct when the apostle thinks of baptism, though he is concerned in the last ground with the inner moment of becoming a believer."[1] And there was still another and a special reason in the present case why Paul should refer to baptism in the course of his exposition of the powers of faith. The

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 366.

point of his argument at this stage was that faith makes all believers one. It is not to be lost sight of that the πάντες in verse 26, the ὅσοι in verse 27, and the πάντες again in verse 28, are all emphatic, as is shown by their position in their respective clauses. Faith in Christ makes all Christians one in Christ, so that, as Paul immediately proceeds to tell us, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." But the unity of faith and of the Spirit requires to be visibly expressed in order to be thoroughly realised. And baptism is a social sacrament, in which this spiritual unity of faith is clearly brought to light. Hence the introduction of baptism in this passage is similar to its introduction at the beginning of the fourth chapter of Ephesians, where Paul demonstrates the oneness of the body filled with the one Spirit, by appealing not only to the one Lord and the one faith, but also to the one baptism.

Of all the Pauline Epistles, 1 Corinthians is the richest by far in positive contributions to a doctrine of the sacraments. It furnishes the only statement in the New Testament, outside of the Synoptic Gospels, of the institution of the Lord's Supper. It contains the only passage in which there can be said to be a plain suggestion of that association between the two Christian sacraments which afterwards became fixed in the mind of the Church (x. 1–4). But what is most important for our present purposes, it offers nearly as many direct references to baptism as we find in all the other Epistles of Paul put together.

Before examining the particular passages which bear on baptism, however, we must notice that though this is not a doctrinal Epistle like Galatians, it contains enough in the way of soteriological teaching to show quite evidently that Paul held to the sufficiency for salvation of the preaching of the gospel on the one hand, and the act of

faith on the other. It is through the foolishness of preaching that God saves them that believe (i. 21). Paul and Apollos are ministers by whom the Corinthians believed (iii. 5); and what was the result of this believing that was mediated by his ministry Paul indicates when he says, "For in Christ Jesus I begat you through the gospel" (iv. 15). There could hardly be a plainer expression of his claim that the word of the gospel which he preached, when received in faith, became the means of regeneration to these Corinthian Christians. And it is to be noted that the thought of baptism is altogether excluded when he asserts that he has begotten them in Christ Jesus, inasmuch as at the beginning of the Epistle he expressly states that, with one or two exceptions, he had baptized no one in Corinth.

Coming now to the references to baptism, we find a good deal of material in the opening chapter in connection with the rebuke which Paul administers to the Corinthian Church for its party divisions and strifes. When he asks, with fine irony, "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" it is certainly implied that all the apostle's converts were baptized, and that they were baptized into the name of Christ. These words thus furnish indisputable evidence of Paul's scrupulous regard for the ordinance; but, at the same time, the manner of his reference to the subject does not justify the assumption that he attached to it any idea of a mysterious supernatural efficacy. So far, indeed, is his mind removed from the thought that baptism into Christ's name was an act by which the Christians of Corinth were mystically united to the Lord Himself, that he proceeds immediately to thank God that he had baptized hardly any of their number —lest any should say that he had baptized into his own name. The very fact of its being conceivable that

baptism into Paul's name might be set over against baptism into Christ's name shows that Paul had not led his converts to attach any miraculous significance to the idea of being baptized into Christ.

Moreover, we cannot but interpret the fact that Paul had baptized so few of his own converts as a proof that he did not regard the act as forming the true moment of salvation. If Paul, whose Christ-given commission and most absorbing passion it was to bring the salvation of Jesus to his fellows, had ever imagined that faith in the gospel which he preached was insufficient for this purpose, while baptism was the very channel through which salvation was imparted, it is incredible that at the most critical moment of all he would have stopped short in his ministry of grace, and would have left his converts still unsaved, or have handed them over to some other person to be brought into the kingdom of God. Besides, we know that his personal dealings with his converts did *not* stop short of their actual salvation. He claims, as we have seen, to be their father in Christ, who had begotten them through the gospel (iv. 15). Elsewhere he says, "For the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord" (ix. 2). And he could not have used such expressions as these unless he believed himself to have been God's instrument in the work of their complete regeneration.

But the most striking thing of all in the present passage is the reason Paul gives for his rule of not baptizing—"Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel" (ver. 17). Is it too much to say that we have here an evident exalting of the word above the sacrament, which shows very clearly the apostle's sense of the relative importance of the two? I do not think so. But as sacramentarian writers protest against such an inference, and maintain that the apostle is simply referring to those "diversities of ministrations" of which he speaks

in a subsequent chapter (xii. 5), and which only go to prove the complex harmony of the one body, and to testify to the working of one and the same Spirit, I shall not press this point. But, at all events, the fact remains that Paul emphatically distinguishes baptizing from the preaching of the gospel; and as he proceeds immediately to define his preaching of the gospel more nearly as the "preaching of the cross" (ver. 18), or the "preaching of Christ crucified" (ver. 23), and affirms that "it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (ver. 21), it is hardly possible for us, in view of the reference he has just made to baptism, to come to any other conclusion than that he did not regard the latter as standing on the same level as a means of salvation with faith in the gospel of the cross. For, having just referred to baptism, and referred to it in the way he does, he would certainly have needed to qualify what he now says as to the saving power of faith in the word proclaimed, unless he was willing to have it understood that baptism is not, in any kind of equivalency with faith, a medium or condition of the salvation that is found in Christ.

Coming now to the sixth chapter, we find Paul saying, with reference to a dreadful list of transgressors of God's law which he has just drawn out, "And such were some of you: but ye washed yourselves, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the Spirit of our God" (ver. 11).

There can be little doubt that the ἀπελούσασθε of this verse contains an allusion to baptism. The analogy of Acts xxii. 16 points to this, and also the fact that ἀπολούω, here as there, is in the middle voice. Notice, however, the particular aspect in which the rite is regarded, as that is brought out both by the use of the middle voice and by the context. Paul is urging those Corinthians not to go to law before the unrighteous, whom, it is worth remarking,

he characterises not as the unbaptized, but as "the unbelievers," although the former term would have been so appropiate to the outward distinction which he is endeavouring to emphasise between the members of the Church and the heathen world. To give force to his appeal, he reminds his hearers that those unrighteous men, whose jurisdiction they have been preferring to that of the saints, have no inheritance in the kingdom of God—following up this general statement with a detailed catalogue of the hateful forms of vice that prevailed among the heathen all around. "And such," he gravely says, "were some of you"; immediately adding, ἀλλὰ ἀπελούσασθε—"but ye washed yourselves."

Now, it is not sufficient to say with Meyer that the middle voice denotes the self-destination of the Corinthians for baptism. It does this undoubtedly, but it also points to the effect of baptism upon their consciousness. Unlike their sanctification and their justification, their baptism is looked at not as a transcendent fact passing beyond the limits of experience, but as a psychological event to which in thought they can return. He wishes to remind them of the way in which at baptism they had consciously and deliberately separated themselves from the sinful world in which they previously lived, and joined themselves to that fellowship of the holy which was theirs by right, inasmuch as their baptism, precisely because they were believers, was the baptism of men who were already sanctified in principle and justified in fact. So Paul's argument is this, "Since at your baptism you both separated yourselves, and were formally separated from the fellowship of unholy men, beware lest in the practical affairs of your daily lives as Christians you tend to forget the deep gulf that divides the unrighteous from the saints."

Few scholars now question that in the opening verses of the tenth chapter of 1 Corinthians Christian baptism

and the Lord's Supper are both distinctly alluded to, although neither of them is expressly mentioned. And the special interest of the passage lies in this, that they are alluded to in close connection with each other, so that we have here, what probably we find nowhere else in the New Testament, a suggestion of that intimate relation between them as kindred rites which is recognised in any general doctrine of the sacraments.

With the allusion to the Lord's Supper we are not at present concerned. But we must notice carefully what is said about the baptism of the Israelites unto Moses, so as to understand its bearing upon Christian baptism. It is evident that in applying the idea of baptism at all to those experiences of Israel, Paul is using the word in a somewhat loose sense; for the Israelites were not "baptized" either in the cloud or in the sea. They did not enter into the cloud, but only looked up to it as their guiding pillar; nor did they pass through the waters of the Red Sea, but, as we are expressly told, passed over on dry land (Ex. xiv. 22–29; Heb. xi. 29). The only point of connection which baptism has with the cloud and the sea is, that baptism is performed by the use of water, and both a cloud and a sea are of an aqueous nature.[1] Paul's employment of the passage of the Red Sea as a type of baptism is thus a bold and free use of history, reminding us of Peter's equally bold use, for a similar purpose, of the ark and the deluge. But while in regard to outward details the type cannot be pressed, it is plain that the apostle means that those events at the commencement of Israel's history were analogous to the experiences that are connected with Christian baptism. The Israelites were baptized into Moses, as believers are baptized into Christ. But in the case of the Israelites this baptism into Moses certainly did not imply that a mystic

[1] Bengel says, "Nubes et mare sunt naturæ aquosae (quare etiam Paulus de columna ignis silet)."

personal union was thereby established between the people and their great leader; and therefore no inference can be drawn from what is said here as to a mystical union through baptism between the believer and his Lord. All that can properly be asserted is that, as the crossing of the Red Sea definitely committed the people to follow Moses as their divinely appointed head, so baptism is a definite committal and consecration to the following of Christ.

But in the case of the Israelites this "baptism" was more than a committal, it was a self-committal, a conscious and voluntary act. For the verb ἐβαπτίσαντο must not be deprived, in this case either, of its proper medial signification, but must be regarded as pointing to a conscious self-dedication. In that great hour of national crisis the Israelites were by no means passive, but deliberately threw off Pharaoh's lordship and attached themselves to the headship of Moses. Thus the notion of baptism that is specially brought before us here, in keeping with the hortatory strain of the whole passage, is that of a conscious pledging of one's self to the abandonment of the old life and the entrance upon the new. And when Alford speaks of this passage as a standing testimony to "the importance of the Christian sacraments as necessary to membership of Christ," he appears to be missing the point of the apostle's argument.[1] For while it is true that, by his reference to those events in the early history of Israel, Paul implies that the Corinthians had openly attached themselves to the Church of Christ by baptism, and had received spiritual nourishment by partaking of the Lord's Supper, his reason for referring to those historical types at all was not that he might testify to the necessity of the sacraments, but that he might remind his readers that sacraments are of no saving worth unless men set themselves to be faithful servants of God. For, observe the application that he immediately proceeds

[1] *Greek Testament, in loco.*

to make of his references to those Israelites who were privileged by the enjoyment of the sacramental types: "Howbeit, with most of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." "And they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come" (vers. 5, 6, 11). And notice further, that the point on which emphasis is laid again and again (observe the πάντες five times repeated) is that though all the Israelites were baptized into Moses, and all ate the same spiritual meat, and all drank the same spiritual drink, most of them, notwithstanding, incurred God's displeasure and perished miserably in the wilderness. "Most of them," he says; but he might really have put the case much more strongly, for, according to the Old Testament narrative, of all those who crossed the Red Sea only Caleb and Joshua were permitted to enter the promised land (Num. xiv. 28–30). Thus, while this passage may justly be taken as proving that Paul regarded baptism as amounting to a definite outward self-consecration to the obedience and service of Christ, it is so far from exalting the importance of the sacraments, or pointing to their necessity in order to membership in Christ, that the express point of the apostle's argument is that sacraments in themselves are of not the least avail, unless in the obedience of faith we set ourselves to fulfil those tasks of being and doing to which we have pledged ourselves by means of these solemn rites.

In the twelfth chapter of the Epistle, after speaking somewhat fully of the diversities of gifts beneath which the one Spirit is working, Paul sums up the matter by saying, "All these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as He will" (ver. 11). Then, to illustrate this unity in diversity wrought by the one Spirit, he brings in the figure of the body and its

members: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ" (ver. 12). And, finally, there comes the verse with which we are specially concerned: "For in one Spirit also were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit" (ver. 13).

It may be taken as pretty generally admitted that *ἐβαπτίσθημεν* is meant to refer to the rite of baptism, and is not to be understood simply as a figure of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. For while it is true that *βαπτίζειν ἐν πνεύματι* was used figuratively by both John the Baptist and Jesus, at a time when the institution of Christian baptism lay in the future, to express the general idea of an effusion of the Spirit, the word *βαπτίζειν* had now become a regular term of Christianity, so that Paul's readers could hardly fail when he used it to think of the familiar ordinance. With the word *ἐποτίσθημεν* there is more difficulty. We may set aside at once, with the great majority of modern commentators, the idea of both Luther and Calvin that it refers to the drinking of the cup (*ποτήριον*) in the Lord's Supper.[1] There is less unanimity on the point whether or not it is to be taken as referring to baptism. The idea of being made to drink seems rather incongruous, no doubt, with the idea of being baptized. But there is less sense of incongruity when we render *ἓν πνεῦμα ἐποτίσθημεν*, "we were imbued with one Spirit"—a rendering of which the expression perfectly admits. And, on the whole, it seems natural from the construction of the verse to associate *ἐποτίσθημεν* as well as *ἐβαπτίσθημεν* with the

[1] This seems to be excluded not only by the absence of any reference to the bread of the Lord's Supper, and by the fact that the thought of a drinking of the Holy Spirit in the cup finds no other scriptural support, but by the aorist tense, which points to an act of the past, and not to one constantly repeated; an act too, which, according to the context, must have taken place at the commencement of the Christian life.

baptismal rite. But now comes another question, the most crucial of all for the interpretation of the verse. What does Paul mean by the phrase ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι at the beginning of the verse? The Authorised Version translates, "by one Spirit," and this we believe to be the proper rendering. The Revisers have adopted the somewhat vague rendering, "in one Spirit," which is a transliteration of the Greek ἐν rather than a help to the understanding of the passage. For the question that has to be decided is whether ἐν denotes a spiritual medium with or in which, or a spiritual agent by whom we were baptized. Grammatically and lexically either rendering is possible; but when the verse is studied contextually, the evidence all points to the latter as the correct one. For in verse 11 the apostle has just said, with reference to the diversities of gifts and ministrations in the Church, "All these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as He will." "Even as He will" (καθὼς βούλεται)—stronger expression could hardly be given to the ideas of personality and voluntary agency. And when he brings in, in verse 12, the figure of the Church as the body of Christ, and then says in verse 13 that Christians are baptized into that body ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι, we naturally conclude that he is thinking of the Spirit as the agent by whom the sacrament of baptism is made use of, and not as a kind of supernatural and yet quasi-physical element in which at baptism we were immersed.

But when Paul says that by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, he is saying no more than this, that baptism is an institution which the Spirit uses for binding men together into the unity of the Christian body. As the sacrament of initiation into the Church, it is a visible bond of union among all believers. And as such the Spirit employs it, even as He employs the word or any other means of grace. Nothing that is said here implies that some supernatural function resides in baptism as such,

much less that it is the medium of spiritual regeneration. And when the apostle goes on to say that we were all imbued with one Spirit, that also, in view of his teaching in every Epistle as to the relation of regeneration to faith, cannot be taken to mean that the essence of the Christian life is first imparted in baptism. This being imbued with the Spirit must point, not to the objective fact of regeneration, but rather to those subjective experiences of spiritual quickening, and especially of the quickening of brotherly love, which were inseparable from the sacrament of baptism as administered in the apostolic age—experiences which in our time may be suggested in some measure by corresponding experiences felt by a young Christian on the occasion of a first communion, and to which, by this appeal to the time of their baptism, Paul would recall those quarrelling and divisive Corinthians.

It is to be noticed, further, that the construction and emphasis of the verse show quite clearly that Paul is not immediately concerned to prove to the Corinthians their possession of the Spirit, much less to prove that it was through baptism that they entered upon the enjoyment of that fundamental gift; but to remind them that whether they are Jews or Greeks, whether freemen or slaves, it is one Spirit who is operative in them all, the regenerating Spirit, namely, who was received through the hearing of faith. The whole chapter is an argument on behalf of unity; and baptism is brought in, just as in the fourth chapter of Ephesians, as a visible symbol and pledge of the unity of all those who through faith have received the one Spirit, a unity of which they were made fully conscious by those joyful experiences which sprang up in their hearts when they were first initiated by baptism into the visible communion of the Christian Church.

There remains one more passage in this Epistle—the very obscure reference in the fifteenth chapter to baptism for

the dead (xv. 29). The prevalent tendency is to regard Paul as alluding to a vicarious baptism of Christians on behalf of their dead friends, presumably on behalf of friends who were in full sympathy with the Christian faith, though they died without being baptized. But the grounds on which this interpretation rests are really very slender. Such a baptism may have existed among the heretical Cerinthians and Marcionites in the second century, as Chrysostom and Epiphanius tell us, but that may only prove that these sects misunderstood Paul's meaning, as it has often been misunderstood since.[1] On the other hand, it is quite possible that the apostle is here referring to a practice of substitutionary baptism observed in certain pagan mysteries,[2] and so finds a witness to the resurrection in the heathen conscience, while the καὶ ἡμεῖς of the next verse adds the more positive Christian testimony to that of the heathen.[3] Again, if ὑπὲρ is translated, not "on behalf of" or "instead of," but "for the sake of," a meaning it very frequently bears in the New Testament, we escape from the idea of a vicarious baptism altogether; and so the verse may simply contain a reference to the fact that persons were sometimes drawn to Christ, and led to profess His name in baptism, by their affection for departed Christian friends, and the hope of meeting them again in the resurrection. They were "baptized for the sake of the dead,"

[1] It is wrong to quote Tertullian, as is sometimes done, in support of such a practice. He merely cites an explanation of our text as applying to a vicarious baptism, without himself approving of it. Cf. Plummer, *Dictionary of the Bible*, i. 245; Armitage Robinson, article "Baptism" in *Encyclopædia Biblica*.

[2] See Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 181; Anrich, *Das antike Mysterienwesen*, p. 119 f.

[3] When Findlay (*Expositor's Greek Testament*) says that this interpretation is forbidden because "οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι, unless otherwise defined, can only mean the recipients of Christian baptism in its well-understood sense," he appears to overlook the fact that ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν supplies a definition of the very kind that he requires. If Christians in those days did not practise a vicarious baptism for the dead—and we have no evidence that they did, unless it is found here—then οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν can only refer to a kind of baptism that was practised by non-Christians.

because love for some one who had fallen asleep in Jesus was the motive that first drew them towards Christ Himself.

But even if we adhere to what is at present the dominant interpretation, and regard it as a fact that there had sprung up in the Church at Corinth a practice of vicarious baptism for the dead, grounded on a belief that this brought benefit to departed friends, we cannot infer from Paul's language that he in any way justifies such a practice, or has the least sympathy with the underlying idea that baptism was an indispensable means of salvation. It is to be observed that there is an air of detachment in the phrases, "they that are baptized" and "What shall they do?" Notice, too, the transition from the third person to the first person, as he passes from the twenty-ninth to the thirtieth verse.[1] If Paul is speaking of certain Christians who practise this rite, he speaks of them only as "third persons," and not at all in a self-inclusive manner, so that his argument amounts to no more than an *argumentum ad hominem*. According to his usual method, moreover, he fastens upon that feature in the case which belongs to his immediate subject, namely, resurrection from the dead; but leaves, in the meantime, quite undecided the relation of such baptisms to the question of personal salvation. He approves of the faith in the resurrection that serves as the motive for such baptisms, though he has no sympathy with the underlying superstitious ideas about the effect of baptism itself. And if we think that Paul should in any case have distinctly expressed his disapprobation, we may remember that the apostle always deals very tenderly with consciences which superstition has rendered weak (cf. viii. 11, 12), as well as with hearts that are sore through bereavement. Possibly this may have been

[1] See Meyer and Alford *in loco*. Cf. Rev. A. Carr, *Expositor*, May 1901, p. 376. It is strange to find Weizsäcker saying that the custom of substitutionary baptism was "plainly homologated by Paul" (*Apostolic Age*, ii. 253).

one of the matters which he felt would best be handled when he came to Corinth in person, and which he even had in view when he said, "And the rest will I set in order when I come" (xi. 34).[1]

When we pass from 1 to 2 Corinthians, we find that the latter is as meagre in its references to baptism as the First Epistle is copious and varied. With regard, however, to the centrality of faith in all that pertains to the Christian life, and the sufficiency for salvation of the word of the gospel believingly received, we have here, as in all the writings of Paul, a reiterated testimony. It is not baptism but faith that is the distinctive mark of Christianity. When the apostle urges that a strict line should be drawn between those who are Christ's and those who are not, he designates them as believers and unbelievers respectively (vi. 14, 15); and that too although in the context he refers to heathenism as the sphere of the unclean, and to Christianity as the sphere of separation from the unclean; a conception with which baptism, as the symbol of cleansing, would so naturally have associated itself (vi. 17). And from beginning to end, in passages too numerous to be mentioned, he dwells upon the thought that faith in the word of the gospel is the true medium for the reception of all the blessings of the Christian salvation.[2]

There is only one passage in which an allusion to baptism may perhaps be found. When Paul says in the first chapter, "Now He that stablisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (i. 21 f.), it is not improbable that he is alluding to baptism under the figure of a seal. For in Romans we have the parallel description of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of faith (Rom. iv. 11); while in Colossians, again, baptism

[1] Cf. Schmiedel, *Hand-Commentar, in loco.*

[2] See i. 19, ii. 15, iii. 2, 3, v. 18, x. 14, xi. 4, 7, xiii. 5.

is brought into close relation to circumcision as its Christian counterpart (Col. ii. 11). And when we find that by the second century the word σφραγίς has come into use as a regular term for Christian baptism,[1] this may help to confirm the view that Paul is alluding to baptism here. But the very fact that baptism is probably alluded to here under the figure of a seal, forbids us to attach to it the idea of a supernatural regenerating function. For the act of sealing is not the creative act, but only its outward ratification. This holds of circumcision, the Old Testament counterpart of baptism. The Israelite was born an Israelite, and his circumcision was an act of obedience and submission to the claim which God already had upon him; it was the sealing of the fact that he was a member of the Israel of God. Of Abraham himself Paul says elsewhere, that his circumcision was "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was yet uncircumcised." Similarly, the believer is a son of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. iii. 26), and, as a son of God, possesses the Spirit of God; but his baptism is a certification of this fact; it is a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was yet unbaptized. And when the apostle proceeds in the next clause to associate this sealing with the receiving of the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, and when in Ephesians he says that Christians are "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance" (Eph. i. 13, 14), and "sealed in Him unto the day of redemption" (Eph. iv. 30), he is not even then identifying the act of baptism

[1] *E.g.*, *Shepherd of Hermas* and 2 *Clement*. Attempts have been made to derive the second century use of σφραγίς for baptism from the terminology of the pagan mysteries (so Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, p. 295; and Harnack, *History of Dogma*, i. 208.) But Anrich has shown very conclusively that the Christian use of the term dates from a time previous to any possible influence of the heathen mysteries upon the Church, and, as it meets us in the N.T., is probably derived from the Jewish description of circumcision as a seal (see Anrich, *op. cit.*, p. 120 ff.).

with the fundamental gift of regeneration, and so confounding the seal of the Spirit with the creative act of the Spirit. Rather, we must say, he is referring to the fact, of which we have abundant evidence in the New Testament, that the ordinance, under the conditions of which Paul is invariably thinking when he refers to the subject, the baptism, namely, of adult converts, was usually accompanied by an intense quickening of the Christian consciousness, a fresh assurance of that reciprocal indwelling of Christ in the Christian and of the Christian in Christ which followed, indeed, immediately from the communication of the new life-principle that was bestowed in response to faith, but was none the less wondrously stimulated by that sense of union with the body of Christ which baptism into the community necessarily carried along with it. By this earnest of the Spirit the sealing act of baptism was raised to its highest power; it was not merely a seal set visibly upon the body by an outward rite, but a seal set inwardly upon the heart—a seal of which the believer himself was conscious, but which also made itself manifest to others in spiritual fruits of joy and enthusiasm and brotherly love, and frequently also, during the first days of Christianity, by those outward manifestations (*φανερώσεις*) which are known as the charismatic gifts.

In the Epistle to the Romans, to which we come next, we find the immediate efficacy of faith for salvation more plainly and fully expressed than anywhere else in the writings of Paul. His gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (i. 16). The righteousness of God is "through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe" (iii. 22). And, not less emphatically than in Galatians, the apostle asserts and reasserts, as every reader of the Epistle is aware, his fundamental doctrine of justification by faith (iii. 26, iii. 28, iii. 30, iv. 5, v. 1).

At the beginning of the sixth chapter, however, for the

first and last time in the Epistle, the subject of baptism is introduced. And here it is of vital importance to grasp the continuity of the apostle's argument, so as to understand the connection between his present reference to baptism and all that he has said in the preceding chapters with regard to faith. Ritualistic interpreters usually deal with Paul's transition at this point from faith to baptism, by assuming that the faith of which he has hitherto spoken is only the condition of saving grace, while baptism is now introduced as the actual means of grace and the real instrument of salvation. Of this manner of stating the case it must be said that it utterly fails to account for the strong and unqualified language regarding faith which the apostle has already used again and again. It seems impossible, on the ground of this single reference to baptism in the course of his longest and most doctrinal Epistle, to set aside his cardinal thought that in the principle of faith itself there lies the whole potency of salvation.

At first sight it might appear that there is more to be said for Weiss's peculiar theory that a distinction is to be made in Paul's teaching, not between the relative values of faith and baptism, but between their respective effects. That Paul taught the doctrine of justification by faith, Weiss holds to be fundamental to any proper exegesis of this Epistle; but he supposes that after establishing this doctrine in the earlier sections, the apostle brings in baptism at the beginning of the sixth chapter as a second principle of salvation, and teaches that, while faith leads to justification, it is baptism that brings union of life with Jesus Christ and the impartation of the Holy Spirit.[1] But however plausible this theory may appear, in view of some of Paul's utterances, the objections to it are really overwhelming. The idea of a man who is justified and adopted into the family of God

[1] *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, i. 454 ff.; cf. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 179 f.

(for Weiss assigns both of these effects to faith) without being united to Christ is altogether inconceivable. Besides, this view furnishes no explanation of the language regarding faith which Paul uses in this very Epistle. For example, at the beginning of the fifth chapter he describes the grounds of justifying faith, and says that by faith we have access into this grace wherein we stand.[1] And not only so, he continues, but we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God; yea, we rejoice even in tribulation, and experience the love of God shed abroad in our hearts *through the Holy Ghost given unto us*. Now, it is hardly possible to suppose that these are the experiences of a man who has been justified indeed, but is not yet actually a Christian, inasmuch as he has not been baptized. No doubt it may be said that when Paul speaks in this way he anticipates what he is to say in the beginning of the sixth chapter, and assumes that this believing and justified man has also been baptized. Probably he does; for Paul always took for granted that believers would profess their faith, and so be admitted through the rite of baptism to the Christian community. But what we have to notice is, that he says nothing whatever about baptism in this connection. The grace in which we stand, the hope of glory, the power to rejoice in tribulation, the sense of the love of God shed abroad in the heart through the Holy Ghost, are all attributed to that same faith by which we are justified.

But, above all, this theory fails to grasp the coherency of the apostle's thought. For it really assumes that there is no necessary connection between what Paul has said in the earlier part of the Epistle about the faith that justifies, and what he now proceeds to say in this and the two following chapters as to the new life of the Christian in

[1] The weight of evidence is altogether in favour of retaining the words τῇ πίστει. And even if they are regarded as a gloss, they are not an interpolation into the apostle's thought, but only an index to his evident meaning.

Jesus Christ; and so it makes him guilty of a very glaring *ignoratio elenchi*. For the objection which he sets himself to meet when he exclaims, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" is an objection to his doctrine of justification by faith, and to meet such an objection by appealing to baptism as a second and entirely different principle of salvation, is simply to evade the point in dispute. In that case, the argument for faith which Paul has elaborated with so much care falls utterly to the ground. In spite of his solemn and thrice-repeated "God forbid!" (iii. 6, iii. 31, vi. 2), he has failed to show that the law is not made void through faith; he has failed to "establish the law," as he claims to do; he has not vindicated his position against those who accuse his gospel of antinomianism. For it is no real defence against antinomian inferences from Paul's teaching to say that, although faith does not contain within itself the provision for a walk in newness of life, such a provision may be had by submitting to the rite of baptism. The fact would still remain that the faith which justifies the sinner, but does not vitally unite him to Christ as the source of sanctification, is in itself essentially antinomian, and may easily lead to very antinomian results.

What, then, is Paul's answer to the challenge that his gospel of justification by faith will tempt men to continue in sin? His answer is, "God forbid! We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" In these words, as Professor Denney has pointed out, there lies the true key to the meaning of the passage.[1] It has frequently been assumed that the dying to sin of verse 2 is nothing else than the baptism of verses 3 and 4; and so that it is in baptism, and in baptism alone, that our death to sin takes place. But Paul is not as yet speaking of baptism, he is

[1] See his illuminating article on "The Righteousness of God and the New Life," *Expositor*, Oct. 1901, especially p. 306 ff.

speaking of faith, and is replying to the objection that faith may tempt us to continue in sin so that grace may abound. It is only if this is the case that he really meets the difficulty and proves that faith can never become an immoral principle, when he asks, "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" And then, having thus affirmed in verse 2 this great truth, that faith in Christ carries in the very heart of it a death to sin, he proceeds to elucidate the statement by means of the illustration of it which lies in the sacrament of baptism. "Or are ye ignorant," he says, "that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him through baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life."

Now, in order to understand the way in which the apostle here identifies the rite of baptism with that death to sin which is wrought by justifying faith, we must remind ourselves once more that what Paul has in view in all his doctrinal references to baptism is the baptism of adult converts. And we must further remember that baptism in the apostolic age was immediately associated with the earliest profession of faith. Apparently there was no such thing in those days as a prolonged probation of the convert, corresponding to the later catechumenate, but faith and baptism were connected with each other immediately, as the inner experience and its outward affirmation and representation. It is so with the baptisms of which we read in Acts. The converts of the day of Pentecost, the believers in Samaria, the Ethiopian eunuch, Cornelius and his household, the jailor of Philippi, were all baptized on the spot. In the case of Paul himself there was an interval of three days between his conversion and his baptism; but even this was evidently due to the fact that until Ananias came there was no one to summon him to baptism and to administer the

rite. Apostolic baptism, then, being the baptism of believers, and an act which usually synchronised with the first definite experience of conscious faith, of which it was the profession and consummation, it was both natural and legitimate to speak of it as the correlative of faith. And when Paul says, "Are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" he is only assuming with regard to others what he knew to be true with regard to himself—that baptism had been a reality and not a mere empty form, a genuine confession of faith on the one hand, and on the other, in correspondence with that, a divinely appointed symbol and seal of the righteousness which faith procures.

There was a special reason, however, why Paul at this point drew the ideas suggested by baptism into the service of his thought; and that was because the symbolism of the rite offered a beautiful illustration of the precise point he wished to enforce, namely, the intimacy of the union which faith brings about between the believer and the Lord. It is practically certain that in the apostolic age immersion was the ordinary form of baptism.[1] And in the disappearance of the convert beneath the water and his emergence again to the light of day, Paul saw a striking symbol of the union with Christ in death and in life which faith accomplishes. And yet the very use he makes of the symbolism of the rite indicates his sense of the real relation between baptism and faith; for the point on which most stress is laid, as it is the point most naturally suggested by the act of immersion, is that baptism is a being buried with Christ. But a burial is not a death; it is only a public certification and sealing of death. And, in like manner, baptism is not a dying with Christ, but rather a sealing of that death in Him and with Him which is immediately brought about by faith.[2]

[1] See Lecture V., p. 225.

[2] Cf. Beyschlag, *New Testament Theology*, ii. 236.

A still further reason why Paul may have introduced the thought of baptism at this stage, is that he is making an appeal to the religious consciousness of his readers. "Know ye not?" he asks; it is a challenge to the personal experience of those Corinthian Christians. To Paul, as we have seen, his baptism had meant much—not, indeed, the mediating of salvation, but the verifying of it; the strengthening into fuller assurance of the sense that he was not only forgiven, but joined in a union of life with the risen Jesus, and even called to be a Christian apostle. And for all converts in those days baptism was a thing of great and solemn moment. It was an act by which they definitely cut themselves off from their old life with all its associations, and pledged themselves to a new life of attachment to Christ and His community. Such an act, carried out under such conditions, could not fail to be productive of a deepened consciousness of that union with Christ both in death and life of which the apostle here speaks, but which, as the whole course of his argument makes plain, he attributes directly to faith.

3. We pass now to that group of four Epistles—Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon—which are commonly known as the Epistles of the imprisonment. They present somewhat marked differences from the four great Epistles of the previous group; but the differences are hardly more pronounced than those that distinguish that group again from the Epistles to the Thessalonians, and they are sufficiently explained by the growth of Paul's own experience, the fact of his imprisonment, the development of the Church as a whole, and the special circumstances of the particular communities to which he was writing. Philemon may be left out of account, as dealing almost wholly with personal matters. Of the remaining three, Philippians is admittedly the latest; while Ephesians and Colossians appear to have been written about the

same time, and with the view of being mutually supplementary.[1]

The special note of Ephesians is the idea of the Church as the body of Christ. By the time when this Epistle was written there were Christian Churches scattered all over the Roman Empire—Churches that were entirely independent of one another. But upon Paul the prisoner there had dawned the splendid vision of those scattered Churches as ideally one Church, a vision to which he gives striking expression when he figures the Church as a body. The influence of this conception runs all through the Epistle. In the great evangelical Epistles of the previous period Paul had spoken especially of the doctrine of personal salvation; but here he speaks of the salvation of the Church. As the Church is Christ's body, so Christ becomes "the Saviour of the body," *i.e.* the Saviour of the Church (v. 23). In Galatians Paul had written, "The Son of God who loved me, and gave Himself up for me" (Gal. ii. 20); but here he says, "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself up for it" (v. 25).

It was with the help of this and similar expressions that Ritschl formed his theory that it is the Church and not the individual which is the proper object of justification. But the New Testament support for this idea is really very slight, and is far more than counterbalanced by the numerous statements which imply a direct dealing of the individual with Christ Himself in the things of salvation. Such statements cannot be explained by any theory that would make the Church the necessary mediary of salvation; while, on the other hand, those expressions in which the Christian society as a whole appears as the immediate object of the divine love and redemption are easily and

[1] The present inclination of N.T. critics is to assign a slight priority to Colossians. But even if this could be satisfactorily made out, it would have no bearing on the baptismal teaching of the two Epistles, and for convenience Ephesians is taken first, as the longer and more important of the two.

naturally explained by the fact that what is true of one believer is true of all, when all are ideally regarded as forming a unity.[1] And what we have particularly to notice is that even in this Epistle, in which the Church looms so large in the apostle's thoughts, there is no difference in his teaching as to the way of personal salvation. Just as in the earlier Epistles, it is the word of the gospel that is set before us as the objective principle of salvation, and faith in that word as the subjective principle.[2]

There is only one passage in Ephesians in which baptism is expressly named (iv. 5). But there is another in which it is evidently referred to (v. 26); and two more in which, as in the first chapter of 2 Corinthians, it seems to be alluded to under the figure of a seal (i. 13, iv. 30). With regard to the two last-mentioned passages, however, it is made plainer here than in the corresponding passage in 2 Corinthians, that Paul regards the sealing as lying not so much in the ceremonial act as in those outward manifestations of the Spirit's indwelling which in the early days of the Church were usually associated with the administration of baptism. It was not with the baptismal water that men were sealed, but with the Holy Spirit of promise. Baptism was the occasion of the sealing rather than the sealing itself. And it is to be noted, as was said before, and as lies in the meaning of the phrase, that even this sealing of the Spirit is not a creative but a declarative act. Baptism was not the moment of the fundamental bestowal of the Spirit, but the occasion of a striking and joyful experience of the truth of the Spirit's indwelling, by which both the believer himself and those around him were assured

[1] As illustrating the weakness of this theory, it might be pointed out that if Christ's self-sacrifice on behalf of the Church, in Eph. v. 25, is used to prove that the proper object of justification is "the Christian society as a whole, and not the individual as such" (Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, p. 122), then Christ's washing of the Church in the following verse ought to mean that it is not the individual as such, but the society as a collective whole, that is baptized!

[2] Cf. i. 13, 14, ii. 8, iii. 6–8, iii. 17.

of the reality of his possession of spiritual life through union with Christ by faith.

In the fourth chapter baptism is directly spoken of in connection with Paul's appeal for a true Christian unity: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all" (4–6). The place given to baptism among those great categories of the Christian creed shows the writer's sense of its importance as a bond of union between the members of the Christian society. The unity of the Church, indeed, is fundamentally a "unity of the Spirit" (ver. 3),—a unity which springs essentially from common faith directed to a common Lord. It is, as Paul says farther on in the chapter, "the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God" (ver. 13). But if this spiritual unity is to be manifested in the world of visible realities, it must be by means of outward forms; and baptism is the rite which Jesus appointed for the very purpose of serving as a mark of Christian discipleship. Paul knew nothing of those elaborate organisations which afterwards grew up, by which far separated Churches were linked together in the unity of a single great corporation. To him the Christian society consisted simply of all those who, having professed their faith in Christ, had been baptized into the fellowship of His people. But because baptism was the distinguishing rite of the members of the Christian society, and the visible bond of their oneness in the Lord Jesus, he very naturally, after appealing to the one Lord and the one faith, appeals to the one baptism in which faith in the Lord is expressed.

More difficulty attaches to the passage in the fifth chapter, where Paul, in speaking of marriage, after comparing the husband to Christ and the wife to the Church, says that Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for

it, "that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing (or bath) of water with the word" (ver. 26). Here, it may be taken for granted, we have a reference to baptism. The apostle sees an analogy between the baptismal rite and the customary antenuptial bath of the bride.[1] But there is nothing in his language that implies that baptism in itself amounted either to the forgiveness of sins or the impartation of the new life. The passage, it is to be observed, is highly figurative. To begin with, baptism is a rite performed upon an individual; and here Paul is speaking of the ideal Church, which can only metaphorically be said to be baptized. Further, as an analogy is suggested between the bath of the bride and the Christian rite, we may conclude that just as the former was meant to be not a mere act of cleansing, but a symbolic rite indicative of the bride's purity, the latter, in like manner, is thought of as a symbol of the purity and holiness of the Church. And that Paul does not mean to ascribe the positive cleansing of the sinful to the water-bath of baptism in itself, is made evident when he attributes the cleansing not to the washing of water alone, but to "the washing of water with the word." It is true that the phrase ἐν ῥήματι has been the subject of much controversy; and widely varying suggestions have been made as to its connection with the rest of the sentence and its exact meaning. But there can be little doubt that if we are to be guided by the use of ῥῆμα elsewhere, not only in the Pauline Epistles, but in the New Testament generally, it can only mean the word of the gospel, the ῥῆμα εὐαγγελισθέν, or word preached, of which Peter speaks, the ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως, or word of faith, as Paul himself describes it.[2] The notion of some of the Fathers, which has been adopted in modern times by Pusey and others, that ῥῆμα here is

[1] See the Commentaries of Alford, Meyer, and Von Soden (*Hand-Commentar*) *in loco.*

[2] Cf. Rom. x. 8, 17; Eph. vi. 17; Heb. vi. 5; 1 Pet. i. 25.

the baptismal formula, finds absolutely no support in New Testament usage, and can only be regarded as an exegetical curiosity. As for the construction, the position of ἐν ῥήματι in the sentence compels us to connect it not with ἁγιάσῃ, which would be a quite unnatural grammatical combination, since no reason can be suggested for such a strange separation of the phrase from its verb, but with the participle καθαρίσας. The meaning, accordingly, is that the cleansing is effected through the instrumentality of the word of the gospel, a statement which finds a parallel in the saying of Jesus in the fifteenth of John, "Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you" (John xv. 3). And if it be asked why then this cleansing word is here associated with the bath of baptism at all, the answer is, not only because in Paul's figure the symbolism of baptism was naturally suggested by the symbolism of the washing of the bride, but because baptism in itself is a fitting emblem of the cleansing power of the gospel, being, as Augustine said, a kind of word made visible ("tanquam visibile verbum").[1] It is the word of the gospel, therefore, that Paul represents as carrying within it the true power of cleansing; and baptism is not regarded as having any inherent efficacy of forgiveness or regeneration, but only as the embodiment and symbol of the living word.

The striking similarity between the dogmatic contents of Ephesians and Colossians makes it unnecessary to dwell upon the general teaching of the latter. Let us only note that in this Epistle also Paul continues to lay his customary emphasis upon faith in the word preached and heard, as the immediate and sufficient means of salvation.[2] There is one remarkable passage, however, in which baptism is set side by side with the spiritual circumcision, while at the same time it is used, just as in the sixth chapter of Romans, as a figure of burial and resurrection with Christ. "In whom,"

[1] *Tractat.* 80, *in Joannem.*

[2] See i. 3–6, i. 23, ii. 5–7.

Paul writes, "ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead" (ii. 11, 12). Very often it is assumed that the baptism of the twelfth verse is the exact equivalent of the circumcision of Christ in verse 11, so that it is by baptism that the spiritual circumcision is effected. But this view is by no means borne out by an examination either of the present passage or of Paul's utterances elsewhere regarding spiritual circumcision. The apostle's immediate object is to fortify the Gentile Christians at Colosse against the efforts of the Judaizers to insist upon their submitting to the Jewish rite of circumcision; and in the eleventh verse he tells them plainly that they need no outward rite of circumcision, inasmuch as they have been circumcised already with the circumcision of Christ. Now, this contrast between the Jewish circumcision and that regenerating experience which he here describes as "the circumcision of Christ" is a fundamental one in the writings of Paul. And on the other occasions on which he makes use of it, it is faith that he sets over-against circumcision, without giving the slightest hint of baptism. "In Christ Jesus," he says, "neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love" (Gal. v. 6).[1] This justifies us in saying with regard to the present passage, that Paul's language in verse 11 about the circumcision of Christ does not primarily refer to baptism at all. And this is certainly confirmed by the epithet ἀχειροποίητος, "not made with hands," which he applies to the Christian circumcision, and which shows that he is thinking of something that does not belong to the sphere of external ritual, but to a world of pure spiritual realities.

[1] Cf. Gal. vi. 15; Eph. ii. 8, 11; Phil. iii. 2, 3, 9.

But now comes the question, What, then, is the relation between what the apostle proceeds to say about baptism in verse 12 and what he has just said in verse 11 about the circumcision of Christ? "Buried with Him in baptism," his language runs, "wherein ye were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead." It is evident from the tenses of the verbs in the two verses that he identifies baptism in the closest way with that spiritual circumcision of which he has just been speaking, and which he declares elsewhere to be mediated by faith. The tenses, indeed, might suggest that the two things are contemporaneous, but no doctrinal inference could be drawn from this as to the relation between the two, since it was the apostolic practice to baptize converts in the very hour of their conversion. And when we inquire further as to that relation, we are compelled by what Paul says in his other Epistles about Christian circumcision, by his language regarding it in the preceding verse, and by his whole teaching as to the bearings of faith and baptism respectively on salvation, to conclude that baptism is here introduced simply as the outward sign of that inward fact of which he has just been speaking.

And this view is corroborated by yet another consideration. It is worth our while to remember that Paul not only distinguishes between the Jewish circumcision on the one hand, and the Christian circumcision on the other, but, even with regard to the Jewish circumcision itself, he distinguishes between its material aspects and its spiritual meaning. The idea, no doubt, was as old as the days of Hebrew prophecy. In the Book of Deuteronomy we read, "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live" (Deut. xxx. 6; cf. x. 16). The idea is repeated by Jeremiah and Ezekiel (Jer. iv. 4, ix. 26; Ezek. xliv. 7). Stephen took it

up in his speech before the Sanhedrin, when he denounced those leaders of the Jewish race as "uncircumcised in heart and ears" (Acts vii. 51). But it was Paul who gave full and final expression to the thought in the magnificent words, "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. ii. 28, 29). And yet, although Paul speaks thus of the outward circumcision, he immediately declares that in circumcision there is "much profit every way" (Rom. iii. 1, 2); while, a little further on, he describes it as a sign which was given to Abraham to be "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was yet in uncircumcision" (Rom. iv. 11). And this teaching of his with regard to the relation between the sign and the reality in the case of the Jewish circumcision, supplies us with a clue to his thought as to the relation between baptism and the circumcision of Christ. Even in Judaism the outward rite was no more than a seal. To Abraham himself it was a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was yet uncircumcised; and to Abraham's seed it was still a seal and nothing more. The child of Jewish parents was a member of the covenant people from his birth. Circumcision did not make him a Jew, but only stamped him as one. And when Paul in this passage draws an analogy between the two dispensations, he certainly suggests by the language he employs that it is not baptism that makes a man a new creature, but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. But he suggests further that baptism is the seal of faith, just as circumcision was under the old covenant; a seal, moreover, that is so closely identified with the reality, that it becomes legitimate to speak of faith in terms of baptism. And if a special reason is wanted for the mention of baptism in the present case, that may be

found in the fact that the rite, with its symbolism of a burial and a rising again, naturally associated itself with the idea of a spiritual circumcision which consisted in putting off the body of the flesh. But it is to be remarked that even here Paul comes back to his great dominating thought in all such connections, the thought, namely, of faith as the fundamental fact which underlies every experience of the divine grace. And so he describes this burial of the old man and resurrection of the new, which are symbolised in baptism, as taking place "through faith in the working of God, who raised Him" (*i.e.* Jesus) "from the dead."

With Philippians we come to the last of the Epistles which Paul wrote during his imprisonment in the Prætorium of Rome. With the exception of the one well-known passage in the second chapter which bears upon the humiliation of Christ, this Epistle is of a practical character throughout. And yet it contains enough of incidental doctrinal reference to corroborate all that we have learned hitherto with regard to Paul's soteriological teaching. Baptism is never once mentioned, nor in the most remote manner alluded to. On the other hand, there is much about the gospel; indeed, no other Epistle of Paul's, with the exception of Romans, which is five times as long, contains the word "gospel" so frequently. And when he speaks here about the gospel, Paul shows that it is the word, and not the sacraments, that he is thinking of, by identifying this gospel in which he glories with the preaching of Christ and the speaking of the word (i. 14, 15, 18). But, above all, we have the characteristically Pauline passage in the third chapter, in which the writer declares that his righteousness as a Christian man is "through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (iii. 9). And the significance of this statement is all the more marked because in this very passage Paul is setting the Christian righteousness over-against the Jewish righteousness, and the

spiritual circumcision over-against what he disparagingly refers to as "the concision." If he had believed, therefore, that baptism was the true antithesis to the Jewish circumcision, the connection of ideas in the passage would almost have compelled him to say so. And thus, over-against the righteousness of the law which begins with circumcision, he would have set the righteousness of Christ as having its foundations laid in baptism. Instead of that, however, he speaks of the Christian righteousness as a righteousness which stands upon the foundation of faith (ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει). This, accordingly, corroborates our interpretation of the passage in Colossians where baptism is set side by side with the spiritual circumcision. It shows that baptism was used there not as being itself the spiritual circumcision, but only as the outward representation of it. And the corroboration grows into a positive proof when we find that those very ideas of a union with Christ that amounts to a burial with Him in His tomb and a rising with Him in His resurrection, which were there illustrated by the symbolism of baptism, are here directly connected with the righteousness of faith. For it is on the ground of this righteousness through faith in Christ, as Paul proceeds to tell us in the very same sentence, that he rests his claim to "know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death."

4. Only the Pastoral Epistles now remain to be considered; and as they are admitted on all hands to be very intimately related to one another, the whole group may be taken together. Into the controversies regarding their authorship it is not necessary for us to enter. Critical opinion at present tends strongly to the view that they were composed, not by Paul himself, but by some unknown author or authors during the first quarter of the second century. On the other hand, it is universally acknowledged that they have come from Paul's school, if not

from his own hand, while some of the critics hold that they embody genuine notes of the apostle, worked up into the Epistles which we now possess. But without, in the meantime, coming to a decision upon these very difficult questions, let us ask whether in the Pastoral Epistles there is any essential deviation from the views hitherto presented to us by Paul as to the place of baptism in the general soteriological scheme. Now what we find is this, that in the course of the three Epistles baptism is only once referred to, namely, in the well-known passage in the third chapter of Titus—unless we choose to find an allusion to it in the words in 1 Timothy, "Thou didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses" (1 Tim. vi. 12), which would represent the rite simply as a confession of faith.[1] Meantime, while there may be noted a certain difference of doctrinal emphasis from anything we have previously found in Paul, that difference leaves unchanged the distinctive Pauline teaching as to the way of salvation. Christianity, no doubt, is regarded as a doctrine, and the word πίστις itself in many cases has acquired the objective meaning of a body of truth which has to be kept (1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Tim. iv. 7; Tit. i. 4), the *fides quæ creditur* rather than the *fides quâ creditur*.[2] But this natural growth of language, according to which a word that denotes a disposition or energy of the mind comes by and by to have an objective content, does not affect the fact that in these Epistles faith is still constantly spoken of in the sense of a subjective disposition or power, that Jesus Christ is represented as its personal object, and that it is regarded as

[1] The "seal," in 2 Tim. ii. 19, does not appear to be a reference to baptism, for the writer is not speaking of an outward sign that is distinctive of all the members of the Church, but of a mark known to God Himself, by which He distinguishes those members of the Church who are His from those who are not.

[2] Cf. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 273; and Von Soden, *Hana-Commentar*, p. 174.

the means of salvation. When we read of "the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. iii. 13), we are reading of a subjective faith, and a faith which is directed towards Christ Himself. When it is said that in the conversion of Paul the purpose of Jesus Christ was to "show forth all His longsuffering, for an ensample to them which should hereafter believe on Him unto eternal life" (1 Tim. i. 16), or that "the sacred writings . . . are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. iii. 15), we have this personal faith in the personal Saviour expressly indicated as the ground of salvation. And even when πίστις is employed to denote a certain body of Christian truth, it must be remembered that a definite subjective meaning still underlies it in the writer's mind. When we read of "keeping the faith," of "erring concerning the faith," of "casting off the first faith," of "falling away from the faith," the fact remains that this "faith" which may thus be kept or lost forms the subject of belief, and that it is in the terms of faith and belief, and not in the terms of any ritual act, that a man's relation to Christ is defined. Apostate Christians are described, not as losing the baptismal gift, but as falling away from the faith.

Notice, too, in this group of Epistles, as elsewhere in the New Testament, that it is always faith and never baptism that is used as the characteristic designation of a Christian. "Be thou an ensample to them that believe" (1 Tim. iv. 12); "any woman that believeth" (1 Tim. v. 16); "they that have believing masters" (1 Tim. vi. 2); "they which have believed God" (Tit. iii. 8): what do phrases like these mean if they do not imply that faith was the foundation and the distinguishing characteristic of the Christianity to which an appeal is thus made? If, further, there is a perceptible growth in these Epistles in the direction of ecclesiastical organisation, this growth, at

all events, is not combined with any tendency towards the latter ecclesiastical ideas as to some peculiar connection between the officers of the Church and the communication of sacramental grace. On the contrary, the special function of an apostle is to preach the gospel (1 Tim. i. 11, ii. 7; 2 Tim. i. 11); the special privileges of presbyters and bishops are to rule and to teach (1 Tim. iii. 2–5; Tit. i. 5, 9); the special qualifications of deacons are of a moral kind, and have no bearing whatever upon sacraments (1 Tim. iii. 8 ff.); the special duties enjoined upon Timothy and Titus are to rule and to teach, and to appoint others who shall do the same (1 Tim. iv. 12 ff.; 2 Tim. i. 8, ii. 2; Tit. i. 5 ff.). And the great concern regarding doctrine which is shown throughout, whatever other conclusions may be drawn from it, points at all events to this, that the emphasis lies on the word and not on the sacraments, on the καλὴ παραθήκη, the "fair deposit," and not on any idea of a mysterious gift imparted through an external rite.

There is one passage in the Pastoral Epistles, however, in which there is undoubtedly a reference to baptism. It is hardly to be questioned that it is baptism that is meant when we read in the third chapter of Titus, "He saved us through the washing (or bath) of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (ver. 5). The sentence in which the words occur is long and involved, and raises a number of difficult points for exegetical discussion. The majority of these points, however, whether grammatical or theological, may quite well be passed over here, as they do not really bear vitally upon the fundamental question as to the function ascribed to baptism in the work of regeneration and salvation.

Without doubt, much of the difficulty that attaches at present to any attempt to arrive at the meaning of the passage comes from the uncertainty that is felt as

to its date and authorship. If the Epistle as a whole, or this passage in particular, was written by some person unknown in the early decades of the second century, fifty years or more after Paul's death, if these words, accordingly, have to be set not against the background of Paul's acknowledged Epistles, but against such a background as is furnished by the *Shepherd of Hermas* or the so-called Second Epistle of Clement, it might be possible to conclude, with writers like Holtzmann and Pfleiderer, that we have here teaching of a more pronounced sacramental type than anything that is found in the writings of Paul.[1] But if Holtzmann is right in maintaining that the baptism here described is one in which the original conception of a symbolic action has been "transformed into a kind of theurgic action,"[2] then all we have to say is that to that extent, as of course Holtzmann himself maintains, this representation of baptism is possessed of no direct apostolic authority, and reveals already the approach of those extra-Christian influences which by the middle of the second century had begun to find their way into the Church. If, on the other hand, we accept the Epistle as Paul's, or even if, without binding ourselves absolutely to its literary integrity throughout, we accept this particular passage as coming from the apostle, which certain of the source-critics themselves are disposed to do,[3] the case is altogether different. We have now to set it against Paul's acknowledged teaching. And when we do so, we are not groping in the dark in seeking to arrive at the meaning of what is confessedly a difficult sentence, for between the lines the apostle's familiar doctrine shines out clearly enough. The expression, "not by works done in righteousness which we did ourselves" (ver. 5), immediately

[1] Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 384; Pfleiderer, *Paulinism*, ii. 208.

[2] *Op. cit.*, *ibid.*

[3] So, for example, McGiffert, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

recalls his language in Romans and Galatians as to the righteousness which is won not by the works of the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. iii. 20–22; Gal. ii. 16). The phrase, "being justified by His grace" (ver. 7), reminds us again of what Paul has repeatedly said regarding faith and justification. Nor is it to be overlooked that in the very next sentence to this one (which is so often quoted as if it conclusively proved that it is baptism that makes a man a Christian), the members of the Cretan Church are described in terms of faith and without any reference to baptism. The symbolism of the bath has been dropped, and they are spoken of not as the "baptized" or the "washed," but as "they that have believed God,"—a designation which is all the more significant since baptism, in any case, was the distinctive rite of admission to the membership of the Church.

If, then, we are standing here on true Pauline ground (and so far as this particular passage is concerned there is no good reason to question it), we are bound to interpret the language before us in the light of all that we have hitherto discovered as to the primary place of faith and the secondary place of baptism in the apostle's teaching. And if it is asked why he should have used such strong language about baptism as this, "He saved us through the bath of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost," and how faith and baptism could be so completely fused together in his mind that he attributes to baptism what ultimately and really he believes to be the function of faith, we may remind ourselves once more that to the Christians of the apostolic age faith and baptism were immediately conjoined in actual experience. This made it natural so to identify the two that the necessity for expressly distinguishing them would not always be felt; and what a teacher had to say about faith might be clothed without any misapprehension in the language of the

symbolic rite which was faith's immediate expression. Further, we must remember once again the tremendous psychological importance of baptism to the converts of those first Christian days, and especially to those who were Gentiles, as most converts were. The act of confessing Christ is always momentous. Those who insist upon the point that in the New Testament baptism is said to save us, may be reminded that the act of confession is also said to save us. It is Paul who writes, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9). If in the deepest soteriological sense baptism can be said to save us, it is because of the confession which it implies, and the faith which lies behind the confession. But in those early days, to confess Christ openly, and to receive in baptism the distinctive badge of Christian profession, meant much more than we usually mean to-day by confessing Christ. It carried with it nothing less than a revolution in the lives of most converts. In a sense which it is hardly possible for us to realise, old things passed away and all things became new. Former ties of friendship and family were suddenly snapped; lifelong habits and associations were definitely renounced; a strange community was entered, in which the believer found himself encompassed from the first by new privileges, new tasks, new obligations. It was a Palingenesia in the world of conscious experience and outward life hardly less wonderful than the mysterious Palingenesia which God's Spirit had already wrought in secret upon the inmost nature. And the whole symbolism of the rite tended to deepen the impression that here and now the old man was being finally put off, and the new man definitely put on. The bath of pure water, the plunge beneath the surface, the rising again to one's feet, the glad welcome into the fellowship of Christ's professed

disciples—all this made it possible, even for a man who had never dreamed that there was any magical transforming virtue either in the water or in the rite, to speak of the moment of his baptism as a moment when God "saved" him "through the bath of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

On a review of the whole evidence, then, it does not appear that Paul's doctrine of baptism differed in any essential respects from the general doctrine of the primitive apostolic community. There is no proper ground for the assertion made by Holtzmann and others, that the primitive doctrine experienced a transformation at Paul's hands, by which the simple symbolic character of the action was filled with a new mystical content which far outran the original significance of the rite.[1] To Paul faith was always the primary moment of salvation, and baptism only the outward sign of the inner reality. If his language sometimes suggests more than this, an examination of the context shows that he has no intention of deposing faith from its dominant and independent position in his whole theological scheme. The expressions which some would harden into a kind of apostolic theory of baptismal regeneration are only figurative expressions, by which he indicates that baptism outwardly represents and ratifies what is inwardly accomplished by faith. The seeming substitution of the outward for the inward is largely explained by the conditions under which Paul's converts were baptized. There was no interval in time between the moment when faith sprang up in the heart and the moment when it was openly professed by submission to that rite ordained by Jesus which was a symbol of the divine grace in which faith had put its trust. It was not strange, therefore, that the outward rite should come to

[1] Holtzmann, *op. cit.*, ii. 180. Cf. Weiss, *Biblical Theology of the N.T.*, i. 454 f.

be immediately identified with the inward reality. To the baptized believer the day of his baptism was the day when he passed from darkness into light, and the solemn ordinance was the tangible seal of his call and acceptance through grace. To the Church, as the visible community of Christians, the sacrament was the visible act by which one who had just joined himself to Christ through faith was now incorporated into the fellowship of Christ's disciples. These considerations fully explain Paul's strongest utterances regarding baptism, and make it quite unnecessary to suppose that when he comes to speak of it he begins to undo his own work as an evangelist and theologian, and to make an external rite, however important and sacred, the ground of that new relation of God to man, and of man to God, which he has hitherto attributed to faith alone.

LECTURE V.

Baptism: Its Subjects and Forms.

In the preceding lectures we have dealt with the teaching of the New Testament regarding baptism, and have arrived at some provisional conclusions as to the meaning and efficacy of the rite. But there are certain matters of more or less importance in connection with this ordinance which hitherto have not been touched upon, but which demand consideration both on their own account and because they have a bearing upon our general conclusions as to the nature of the sacrament. Four points in particular call for separate notice: the *subjects*, the *mode*, the *administrator*, and the *formula* of baptism; and these will be examined in the present lecture.

I. First, and of most importance, there is the question of the *subjects* to whom baptism is to be administered. Hitherto we have spoken of the ordinance on the supposition that the baptized person is an adult, capable of repentance and faith. For there can be no doubt that it is adults who are immediately in view in the New Testament references to the sacrament. Whether infant baptism was practised by the apostles or not, at all events it is adult baptism that directly meets us in the Acts, and adult baptism also that serves as the type for the doctrinal utterances of the Epistles. And as infant baptism, on the other hand, is the form in which the sacrament is most familiar to ourselves, and the doctrinal views of most modern Christians constantly tend to accommodate

themselves to that, as if it were the original and normal type, it becomes an important question whether there is any scriptural justification whatever for the baptism of infants, or whether, in the light of New Testament practice and teaching, the ordinance should be administered only to those who are in a position to make a deliberate profession of their faith.

1. Our first concern in facing such a question must be to learn, if possible, the mind of Christ upon the subject. We have seen that there is every reason to believe that baptism was instituted by the Lord Himself as the distinctive mark of Christian discipleship, and was not simply an ecclesiastical regulation of later growth. But with regard to the subjects of baptism, the words of institution, as recorded in Matthew, do not afford us the direction that we seek. The Church was to make disciples, baptizing them, and thereafter it was to teach those disciples to observe all the Lord's commands. It is certainly too much to infer from this, as is sometimes done,[1] that by indicating that the process of discipleship is from baptism to instruction, Jesus points to child baptism, followed by teaching, as the normal procedure. On the other hand, it must be claimed that Christ's words at least leave the matter open. For it cannot be professed on any grounds of Scripture or experience, that it is impossible for infants born in a Christian home to be entered as disciples in the school of Christ. On the contrary, as every one knows, it is in infancy and early youth more than at any other stage that influences, unconscious as well as conscious, sink most readily and most deeply into the heart; and the ideal type of Christianity, as suggested to us in the New Testament, is that of one who from his tenderest years has learned to know and love and follow Jesus. The passage at the end of Mark is of more than doubtful

[1] *E.g.*, Alford, *in loco*. Cf. Martensen, *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 428.

genuineness. But, as we have seen, it is quite possible that it embodies an authentic tradition of a saying of the Lord. And while much has been made, from the Antipædobaptist point of view, of the expression, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (ver. 16), as if it plainly implied that our Lord meant to teach that the rite is to be administered to none but believers, it is evident that this line of argument would equally apply to what is said in the same verse about salvation, and so would lead to the conclusion that infants die unsaved if they die unbaptized—a conclusion, it need hardly be remarked, which our Baptist brethren are as quick to repudiate as any others. This being so, it seems only fair to say that the words about baptism at the close of the second Gospel, supposing them to have come from the Lord Himself, have no more bearing upon infant baptism than they have upon infant salvation.

An implicit declaration of the necessity of infant baptism is commonly found by High Churchmen in the words of Jesus to Nicodemus regarding the birth "of water and the Spirit" (John iii. 5). For, holding as they do that Jesus is speaking here of Christian baptism, and is proclaiming its necessity as the medium of regeneration, they infer that this makes baptism indispensable alike for infants and for adults, as the gateway of admission into the kingdom of God. But we have seen already that there is no ground, exegetical or historical, for the idea that in His conversation with the Pharisee our Lord was speaking of the future sacrament of the Church. And this being the case, it is absolutely impossible to find in His words anything that bears upon the question of infant baptism at all. So far, then, as Jesus Himself is concerned, it appears that His utterances regarding baptism do not determine in any direct way the question as to the proper subjects of the ordinance. They leave this matter to be

decided by the wider principles of His own teaching and the promised guidance of the Spirit of truth.

2. When we pass to the history and teaching of the apostles, the evidence certainly appears to be unfavourable to the view that from the first they practised and enjoined the baptism of little children. It is very common to allege Peter's words at the conclusion of his sermon on the day of Pentecost, as if they formed a charter for infant baptism furnished at the very beginning of Christian history.[1] "Repent ye," he said, "and be baptized every one of you upon the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him" (Acts ii. 38, 39). It is frequently assumed that "to your children" means, not to your posterity, but to your immediate offspring.[2] This view, however, does not seem to be in harmony with the balance of the apostle's thoughts. For it is generally admitted that by "those who are afar off" Peter means the Gentiles; and so he is here setting the two races side by side, as being both invited to share in the Messianic promises.[3] And in this case, it seems less appropriate to single out the children of that particular generation of Jews than to apply the words generally to the Jews of that and all coming generations on the one hand, and the

[1] Alford, *e.g.*, says, *in loco*, "Thus we have a providential recognition of Infant Baptism at the very founding of the Christian Church."

[2] Alford justifies this by referring us back to verse 17, and saying that the children referred to are the children in the sense of the prophecy there quoted. But nothing could well be more inapt to his thesis that verse 39 is a providential recognition of infant baptism. For the children spoken of in verse 17 are sons and daughters old enough to prophesy, and young men capable of seeing visions.

[3] Of course, as Peter's subsequent history shows, this was on the presupposition that the Gentiles should first come within the range of the Jewish covenant by being circumcised. It was not until the Spirit had descended upon Cornelius and his friends that Peter began to understand the freeness of the invitation to the Gentiles.

Gentile races on the other. But even if this particular point were conceded, and it were held that it is the sons and daughters of his hearers to whom the apostle refers, it cannot be said that his words contain any suggestion that *infant* children should be baptized. His call to those men was a call to repentance, repentance specifically for the sin of rejecting Jesus (vers. 23, 26, 37), and to baptism as a sign of their repentance on the one hand, and of God's forgiveness on the other. There is nothing to lead us to believe that he was urging them to have their young children baptized as well as themselves. In point of fact, it seems evident that there were no infants among the three thousand persons to whom the rite was administered on the day of Pentecost, since those who were baptized are expressly described as "they that gladly received his word" (ver. 41). And when Peter goes on to say, "For to you is the promise, and to your children," this amounts to no more than a reminder that their children, as members of the covenant race, were heirs by that very fact to all the promises of the Messianic age. We must not suppose that at this early period Peter set the new covenant in definite outline over-against the old, and conceived of baptism as taking the place of circumcision, so that all the children of Christians ought to be baptized in infancy, because the male children of Jews were circumcised upon the eighth day. On the contrary, we know that he still thought of circumcision as the distinctive sign of God's covenant with His people, and still regarded the people of Israel, simply because they were Israelites, as the children of the covenant and the heirs of the divine promises.[1] In all likelihood, his views at this time as to the proper subjects of baptism did not differ from those of John the Baptist with regard

[1] See Acts ii. 39, iii. 25. So far as the Jewish-Christian community was concerned, this view, in spite of the various shocks which Paul gave it, did not die out till after the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple. Cf. Acts xxi. 21 ff.

to the rite that he administered in the Jordan. It is not usually supposed that John baptized infants. He baptized only those who came to him confessing their sins. His baptism was characteristically the baptism of repentance. And while the Christian baptism which Peter preached differed in many ways from the baptism of the Forerunner, and above all in this, that it was a baptism not of mere preparation for the Messiah, but of faith in Jesus as the Christ who had already come, still, it also was characteristically a baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins, as this very sermon of the apostle's sufficiently shows. The Messianic promises belonged to the Jews in virtue of the old covenant, regarded as still subsisting. The children of Jewish parents were heirs to these promises on the ground of their birth, followed, in the case of male children, by the sealing rite of circumcision. And in respect of the fact that the blessings of the Messianic time belonged not to Israel merely, but to the true Israel who recognised in Jesus their Lord and Christ, the faith of the father was probably regarded as carrying with it a blessing for his children, in virtue of that organic relation between the parent and the offspring to which in the Jewish Church so much importance was always attached.[1]

There is no plain sign, therefore, of infant baptism, so far as we can discover, in the earliest days of the Jerusalem Church. But what is far more significant is, that no positive evidence of the practice is to be found even in the later days of apostolic history. In this respect there is no difference between the evidence which comes from Paul's Epistles, together with the record of his preaching in Acts, and the evidence presented by the rest of the New Testament. The attempt is frequently made to found at least an inferential proof upon the fact that we read in the New Testament of the baptisms of certain "house-

[1] Cf. on this point 1 Cor. vii. 14.

holds."[1] The argument is one which possesses very little weight. And it would possess little weight even though we knew, which we do not, that there were infants in any of the three households that are spoken of as receiving baptism. If, indeed, on other grounds, we were sure that infants were baptized by the apostles, it would be natural to conclude that when a household was baptized, its infant members, if there were any, would not be left out. But, in the absence of such an assurance, these cases really prove nothing at all. They still leave us face to face with the preliminary inquiry, Whom did the apostles regard as the proper subjects of the ordinance? In two out of the three cases just referred to, the weakness of the argument is brought home to us by other expressions that are used with reference to these very same family groups. The verse which reports the baptism of the Philippian jailor and his house is immediately preceded by another which tells that Paul and Silas "spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house" (Acts xvi. 32). In 1 Corinthians, again, Paul informs us that he baptized the household of Stephanas (i. 16); but in the same Epistle he describes that household as having "set themselves to minister unto the saints" (xvi. 15). These expressions, of course, do not prove that there were no infants in the houses referred to. But they do prove that when

[1] This argument, it must be said, is constantly presented in an altogether exaggerated form. Language is used which implies that the baptism of a household is an incident of frequent occurrence in the New Testament. Dr. Schaff, for example, says, "The presence of children in some of these households is far more probable than their absence in all" (Schaff-Herzog, *Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge*, i. 209). And even Bengel writes, "Quis credat in tot familiis nullum fuisse infantem?" But the use of a word like "tot," and even the balancing of "some" of those households over-against "all," is decidedly misleading, since, in point of fact, there are only three households of whose baptism we read, the households, namely, of Lydia (Acts xvi. 15), of the Philippian jailor (Acts xvi. 33), and of Stephanas (1 Cor. i. 16). It is not the family of Cornelius to whom the rite is said to have been administered, but a mixed company that included his kinsmen and near friends.

certain things are attributed to a household collectively, the language must be read with this limitation, that only those members of the house are meant to be included to whom those things properly apply. The baptism of a household, therefore, it must be said again, proves nothing, so long as we do not know whether the apostles regarded infants as proper subjects of the administration. Sometimes the argument is presented in a way that is intended to obviate the double uncertainty as to whether there were infants in the houses in question, and whether the sacrament was held to be applicable to such youthful subjects. Professor Orr says that whether there were infants or not is not the point. "The point is that the household was baptized along with its head, and on the ground of connection with its head. If there were young children in any of those households, it is morally certain that they would not be excluded from the sign of the covenant."[1] And Alford writes: "Baptism as known to the Jews included, just as it does in the Acts (xvi. 15, 33), whole households—wives and children."[2] This argument is based upon the covenant made with Abraham, and the continuity of the Church under the old and new dispensations. The continuity is a great truth, without doubt, a truth to which we shall presently refer. But surely it is a mistake to state it in a form which would imply that a man's wife and grown-up children, and even his slaves,[3] would be baptized by the apostles on the ground of the faith of the head of the house himself. This is not only contrary to the whole teaching of the New Testament as to the necessity of a personal approach to Christ, but is contradicted by the

[1] *United Presbyterian Magazine*, June 1900, p. 259.

[2] *Greek Testament*, note on Matt. xxviii. 19. Cf. Dr. Plummer in his article "Baptism" in *Dictionary of the Bible*, i. 242: "According to the ideas then prevalent, the head of the family represented and summed up the family. In some respects the *paterfamilias* had absolute control of the members of his household (Maine, *Ancient Law*, ch. v.)."

[3] See the case of Abraham, Gen. xvii. 23.

fact that the preaching of the word and the appeal for faith were addressed to *all* the members of the house, and also by the use of such expressions as, "he feared God with all his house," "he believed in the Lord with all his house."[1]

Now, this absence of positive evidence for the practice of infant baptism in the apostolic age does not absolutely prove that there was no such thing. In large measure it may be set down to the inevitable conditions of missionary preaching and missionary work generally, as they have always existed in any new field.[2] Of necessity it is the unconverted adult whom the missionary addresses, and whom he summons to baptism; and until parents have been themselves brought to Christ, and Christian homes have been formed, infant baptism, except on some magical theory of its efficacy, can hardly be said to have a proper place. No doubt, too, it is formally a fallacy to argue, as is often done, that because repentance and faith are demanded—of adults, therefore infants were never baptized. None the less, it is impossible to shake off the impression of the fact that the New Testament contains no direct reference, whether historical or doctrinal, to the practice of infant baptism. It hardly suffices to set this down altogether to the circumstances of a missionary Church, for a missionary Church has its infants and young children like any other Church, and the question of their relation to Church ordinances is bound very soon to emerge. It must be remembered, too, that even Paul's Epistles were

[1] Cf. John iv. 53; Acts x. 2, xviii. 8. Such expressions afford a further illustration of the precariousness of any argument as to infant children that is drawn from the statement that a man was "baptized with all his house."

[2] The late Mr. Pirret, in his *Baptist Positions Untenable* (p. 56), gives an interesting illustration on this point. He tells us that he searched through a whole year's issue of the *Missionary Record* of the United Presbyterian Church, and found no case of infant baptism, but a large number of cases of adult baptism. Infant baptisms are constantly taking place, of course, in Presbyterian missionary churches; but it is the conversion and subsequent baptism of the adult that most naturally finds a place in the annals of the Church.

composed a considerable time after the origination of the Christian communities to which his letters are addressed, and that in all those communities a generation born in Christian homes was growing up; a fact of which Paul himself in his later Epistles takes due cognisance (Eph. vi. 1–4; Col. iii. 20, 21). And when we pass to some of the other books of the New Testament, we find that a much longer interval has elapsed between the era of the first missionary proclamation and the state of matters with which the writers are now dealing. The Churches are settling down to ordered ways; practice and organisation are gradually becoming more fixed. The silence of these writers is therefore all the more suggestive. It may not absolutely justify us in saying that there was no such thing as infant baptism in the apostolic age, although that is the conclusion that has been come to by a very large body of critical scholars, conservative as well as advanced.[1] But if it is not quite decisive as to this point, at all events it casts an illuminating ray upon the apostolic doctrine of baptism. It proves that the apostles cannot have attached to the rite the issues of life or death; they cannot have held and taught that by baptism infants were regenerated. For while it may be possible, under a different theory of the significance of the sacrament, to hold that infants were baptized from the very first, although nothing is said about the matter in the New Testament, this complete silence is altogether inexplicable from the standpoint of any theory which first of all insists that baptism is "either regeneration or nothing," and then maintains, in the next place, that an absolute equation must be made between the baptism of infants and the baptism of adults.

Very frequently we hear an argument like the following, in support of the view that infant baptism was the regular practice from the earliest days of the Church. The members

[1] *E.g.*, Neander, Meyer, Weiss, Beyschlag, Harnack, Holtzmann.

of the Jewish Church, it is said, had been accustomed to circumcise their children; and so the baptism of children would be regarded by the first Christians as a matter of course and a matter of right. Any seeming exclusion of infants from the blessings of the covenant, in which they had fully shared under the former economy, would inevitably have created such a disturbance as would have left some traces upon the early history of the Church. It might as well be argued that because at the Jewish Passover young children were present as partakers of the feast, therefore the first Christians, as a matter of course and a matter of right, would bring their little children to the Lord's Table. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that circumcision was a rite which applied not to *all* children, but only to *male* children. The circumcision of male children, therefore, could not immediately and as a matter of course become the ground of a claim that children of both sexes should be baptized. And if it was the case under the Jewish dispensation that a girl or a woman enjoyed the privileges of the covenant by her very birth as a Jewess, coupled with her relation to the head of the family, is there any reason to doubt that Jewish Christians would have no great difficulty in accepting the baptism of parents as carrying with it a present share for their young children in the privileges of the Christian community?[1] Besides, it must always be remembered that the Chris-

[1] Sometimes the attempt is made to strengthen this argument from circumcision to baptism by a reference to the baptism of the proselyte. When a proselyte was baptized, it is said, his whole household, down to its youngest member, was baptized with him; and it may be supposed that the Christian practice would conform to this custom. (See Professor Orr in the *United Presbyterian Magazine* for 1900, pp. 214, 259.) Opinions differed, however, on the subject of the baptism of the children of proselytes. (See Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, ii. 746.) And in any case, the analogy from proselyte baptism is not one that it is safe to apply to Christian baptism; for whatever may be thought about the younger children of the household, it is exceedingly unlikely that the older children would be baptized by the apostles on the mere ground of their father's faith, as the analogy from proselyte baptism would suggest.

tianity which meets us in the New Testament is not in the main a Jewish Christianity at all, but a Gentile Christianity. The analogy of Jewish circumcision would not naturally suggest itself to Paul's Gentile converts as a reason for seeking baptism on behalf of their children. And Paul himself, who first worked out the relation between the two dispensations, and pointed to a certain correspondence between baptism and circumcision, does not give any evidence of having pressed upon his Gentile converts the duty of having their infant children baptized. Rather he appears to have held that through their organic relation to their parents, and apart from the idea of baptism altogether, the children of Christians possess a certain federal "holiness" whereby they are brought within the sphere of Christianity, and so, in virtue of their birth itself, belong already to Jesus and His Church.[1]

3. The New Testament evidence, then, seems to point to the conclusion that infant baptism, to say the least, was not the general custom of the apostolic age. And now it ought to be noticed that this conclusion is greatly strengthened if we examine the light that is thrown backwards upon the age of the apostles from the post-apostolic history and literature. We find, for example, that in the liturgical part of the *Didaché*, a work which dates most probably from the end of the first or the beginning of the second century,[2]

[1] See 1 Cor. vii. 14. At this point there is a more reliable analogy with proselyte baptism. For whatever might be the practice with regard to those children of a proselyte who had been born previous to his baptism, the children born subsequently did not require to be baptized, but were looked upon as born "in holiness." See Edersheim, *op. cit.*, *ibid.*

[2] The *Didaché* is of extraordinary interest for the student of early Christian history. Its "archaic simplicity," as Lightfoot said, "is only consistent with the early infancy of a Church." And Loofs puts the truth vividly before us when he remarks that in this writing "we scent the air of the primitive Christian time" (Hauck-Herzog, *Realencyklopädie*, i. 39). The date of the document has been the subject of much debate, and the suggestions of different scholars on this point have had an extraordinary width of range. Sabatier made it precede the days of Paul's missionary activity; while Dr. Bigg would apparently carry it down

a chapter is devoted to the subject of baptism, and rules are laid down for its proper observance (chap. vii.). But no provision is made for the baptism of infants. All the prescriptions imply that the subjects of baptism are adult persons. The chapter begins, "Having taught all these things" (*i.e.* all the doctrinal matters which have been set forth previously regarding the way of life and the way of death), "baptize ye into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (vii. 1); a rule which clearly implies that the rite was preceded by a considerable amount of catechetical instruction. And at the end of the chapter, again, both the baptizer and the baptized are enjoined to fast, while the baptized is commanded to fast for one or two days beforehand (vii. 4); an injunction, evidently, which can only be meant to apply to adults. Now, if the silence of the New Testament is suggestive, much more so is the silence of the *Didaché*. For while in the former baptism is dealt with historically and doctrinally, from the point of view of its connection with the preaching of the gospel and with faith, in the latter it is dealt with liturgically, from the point of view of its place in the order of public worship; and if infant baptism was practised at all, it is difficult to see how it could be altogether ignored in this handbook of ritual prescriptions. Moreover, although the Church was still a missionary Church and conversions from the outside world were constantly being made, it had

to the fourth century! (see his *Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles*, p. 38). But both extremes are quixotic, and may be regarded as little more than critical *curiosa*. The choice practically lies between the closing decades of the first and the early decades of the second century, English scholars generally favouring the earlier period, and Continental ones the later. Dr. Abbott, in his article "Gospels" in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, gives 80–110 as the date, and this is about the average of critical opinion at the present time. It is worth noticing that Harnack, who, in the original edition of his *Lehre der Zwölf Apostel* (pp. 161–170), advocated a period between 120 and 165, has more recently admitted that the earlier date presents the fewest difficulties, and that the *Didaché* may properly be described as belonging to the age of Hadrian (see his article "Apostellehre," Hauck-Herzog, *Realencyklopädie*, i. 722).

now been in existence for two generations and had already set itself to the task of organisation, the *Didaché* itself being witness. Its polity and discipline were in process of formation, and there was something corresponding to a "Directory for Public Worship." It is strange, therefore, to find Dr. Schaff, in his admirable work on the *Didaché*, apologising in the following manner for the absence of any reference to the baptism of infants in a work which he himself describes as "The Oldest Church Manual." "Infant baptism," he says, "has no sense, and would be worse than useless, where there is no Christian family or Christian congregation to fulfil the conditions of baptism and to guarantee a Christian nurture."[1] The remark is very just in itself, but, as applied to the *Didaché* with the view of explaining why its silence about infant baptism cannot properly be used as an argument against the apostolic origin of the practice, it seems remarkably *mal à propos*. Surely, towards the end of the first century (Dr. Schaff assumes the work to have been written then), and in a Church which had drawn up its own Church manual, there were Christian families and Christian congregations to guarantee the conditions of Christian nurture. And so, when we find that in this early handbook the directions for baptism take no cognisance whatever of infants, but provide for adult baptism alone, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that, at all events in that part of the Church in which the *Didaché* circulated, infant baptism can neither have been regularly practised nor regarded as the apostolic rule.

The case is not different when we come to Justin Martyr, whose *Apology* was probably written before the middle of the second century. In the picture which he gives us of the baptismal arrangements of the Church in his own day, infant baptism finds no place. The baptized are those "who are fully persuaded that what we have

[1] *The Oldest Church Manual*, p. 31.

taught them is in accordance with the truth, and who have devoted themselves to a Christian life" (i. 61). Much has been made by certain writers of a sentence in an earlier chapter of the *Apology*, where Justin says: "And many men and women who became disciples of Christ from their childhood remain pure at the age of sixty or seventy years" (i. 15). This has been interpreted as if the writer were speaking of infant disciples, and as if discipleship necessarily meant nothing else than baptism.[1] But παῖς is the word which Justin uses, a word of pretty wide application, which by no means necessarily means an infant, or even a young child. And in the absence of any evidence that infant baptism was the general custom of the age of Justin, it is natural to suppose that when he speaks of children who became disciples, he is referring either to the well-known institution of the catechumenate, or simply to the fact that among the older members of the Church there were many who had given themselves to Christ in the days of their youth.

What is probably the earliest reference to infant baptism is found in a work of Irenæus, dating from the last quarter of the second century. Speaking of Christ, Irenæus says, "He came to save through means of Himself all who through Him are born again (*renascuntur*) unto God, infants (*infantes*), and little children (*parvulos*), and boys, and youths, and old men."[2] Even here, it will be observed, baptism is not directly mentioned; so that the passage cannot be cited as an unequivocal witness for the practice of infant baptism. Still, as it had become the common custom in the time of Irenæus to use expressions like "regeneration" and "the new birth" as equivalents for baptism, it is generally held by historical scholars that the

[1] See Bishop Harold Browne's *Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles*, p. 674.

[2] *Adversus Hæreses*, ii. 22. 4.

word *renascuntur* in this passage is to be interpreted as applying to the sacrament. And as this "regeneration" is affirmed of infants, that would serve to show that by the time of Irenæus the practice of infant baptism had come into existence.[1] But now comes the striking fact, that not long after Irenæus, and at the very close of the second century, we find Tertullian coming forward as a vigorous opponent, not of infant baptism merely, but of the baptism of children (*parvuli*).[2] He maintains that only those who are capable of deliberate choice and intelligent faith should come to the ordinance; and he appears to hold, further, that the innocence of childhood makes it unnecessary that any haste should be shown in seeking on their behalf for the remission of sins. It is true that Tertullian's plea for delay itself implies that by this time child baptism was common; but it seems equally apparent that he cannot have regarded the practice either as possessed of absolute apostolic authority, or as forming any necessary part of ecclesiastical orthodoxy, otherwise he would hardly have ventured to oppose it so strongly as he does, in a treatise written in his pre-Montanist days, while he was yet in general sympathy with the existing ecclesiastical order.

It is not till we come to a writing of Origen, which dates from the second quarter of the third century, that we find, for the first time, the claim made on behalf of child baptism (*parvuli*, not *infantes*, is the word used), that it rests upon apostolic tradition.[3] And there are two considerations which go far to qualify this claim. One is the well-known fact that by the time of Origen it had become

[1] Cf. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, ii. 142.

[2] "Cunctatio baptismi utilior est, præcipue tamen circa parvulos" (*De Baptismo*, 18). Note that *parvuli*, the word here used by Tertullian, is the word which in the Latin version of Irenæus is distinguished from *infantes*. To the *parvuli*, as thus distinguished from *infantes*, Irenæus had attributed the capacity of following Christ's example of piety, well-doing, and obedience.

[3] *Epistola ad Romanos*, v. 9. In the translation of Rufinus the words are, "Ecclesia ab apostolis traditione accepit."

very customary to trace back to the apostles institutions and ideas that were by no means apostolic. The other is that Origen's testimony as to the apostolic origin of child baptism is not in keeping with the attitude to the subject of his predecessor Tertullian, or with the practice of the Church for more than a century after his own time,—indeed, right on to the days of Augustine. For if Tertullian's critical treatment of the practice signifies much for the preceding period, it is no less significant that during the fourth century pious Christian people, and even office-bearers in the Church, appear to have felt themselves under no obligation to have their children baptized. Gregory Nazianzen was the son of a bishop, while his mother was the devout and zealous Nonna. The grandparents of Basil the Great, as well as his parents, were earnest Christians, and his mother Emmilia was a woman of such noted piety that she was afterwards canonised. Chrysostom was the son of the saintly Anthusa, and Augustine the son of the no less saintly Monica. And yet none of these distinguished fathers of the Church was baptized in childhood. And if infant baptism was not regarded as obligatory in such families as these, it cannot have been generally accepted during the fourth century as an institution which had come down from the apostles, and had been maintained in the Church, *semper, ubique, et ab omnibus.*

It may be said, no doubt, that the neglect of infant baptism during the fourth century was due to the rise of superstitious ideas about the heinousness of post-baptismal sins, which came in to reinforce the reluctance of the natural heart, as in the case of Augustine, to submit to such a renunciation of worldly and sinful pleasures as baptism demanded. But while such ideas and motives may explain to us why a hitherto unbaptized adult frequently postponed his baptism year after year, or even,

like Constantine the Great, till he lay on his deathbed, they hardly explain how it came to pass that Christian parents could refrain from having their children baptized in infancy, if they believed this to be the unquestionable apostolic and scriptural rule. And with regard to the evident observance of child baptism in certain circles of the Church during the third century or even earlier, as witnessed to by writers like Cyprian, Origen, Tertullian, and probably Irenæus, it must be remembered that it is quite as easy to explain this on doctrinal grounds as it is to find in later doctrinal tendencies an excuse for the disposition to delay baptism as long as possible.[1] There can hardly be any doubt that it was largely connected on the one hand with the growth of the sense of inherited sinfulness, and on the other with the development of magical ideas as to the efficacy of the sacrament. Indeed, while Tertullian himself is by no means free from such ideas in his general conception of baptism, his condemnation of child baptism appears to have been in part a protest against much more exaggerated views upon the subject which were growing up around him, and were specially associating themselves with the baptism of little children.

The evidence from Early Church history thus appears to be even more unfavourable to the view that infant baptism was the rule of the Church from the very first days, than the evidence of the New Testament. The New Testament evidence is mainly negative, but that which meets us in the post-apostolic history and literature is decidedly of a more positive kind. Not only do we find no distinct trace of infant baptism till the last decades of the second century, but even after it has become a common practice, it is vigorously opposed by one of the greatest theologians of the Western Church, and ignored both in the East and West by parents who are reckoned among

[1] Cf. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, ii. 142, note 2.

the very *élite* of early Christianity. In these circumstances, it is exceedingly difficult to believe that the practice was handed down from the first age to the Church of succeeding generations as resting absolutely upon the precept and example of all the apostles.[1] Sometimes it is said, If infant baptism was not practised by the apostles from the very first, how are we to account for the introduction of so great an innovation as this into the ritual of the Church? But it might quite as well be asked, If it was the apostolic rule to baptize the infant children of Christian people without exception, how can we account for the subsequent non-observance of this rule upon so wide a scale? Indeed, the second argument is much more cogent than the first, inasmuch as in matters of ritual it is usually far easier to add something new than to take away anything that is old, and that has become consecrated by familiar use. If infant baptism was the unanimous tradition handed down by the apostolic Church, it is difficult to see why at any point the practice should have ceased, and why there was so much uncertainty and lack of unanimity regarding it. On the other hand, if it was not originally the custom of the Church, the introduction of an innovation in this respect is quite in keeping with the fact that many other innovations gradually arose, some of them good and some of them bad, some capable of being described as natural developments in thorough harmony with the principles of New Testament teaching, but others requiring to be set down as degenerations from the true and original Christian type.

Our conclusion, then, from all the evidence is, that infant baptism was not the general practice of the apostles, and probably not the practice of any of them during the first Christian generation. On the other hand, it is just

[1] "If there had been a tradition of apostolic baptism of children, the wavering of the Church on the subject even so late as the age of Tertullian and Augustine would have been impossible" (Beyschlag, *N. T. Theology*, i. 319).

possible that after the destruction of Jerusalem and during the closing decades of the first century, and so during the lifetime and ministry at Ephesus of the Apostle John, the practice had begun, at least in certain parts of the Church, and that it had received the sanction of St. John himself. This may account for its recognition by Irenæus, who was linked with John through Polycarp, and it may so far justify Origen's description of it as apostolic. But, in any case, it seems evident that for long there was a lack of any fixed usage in the matter. Perhaps one of the circumstances that would contribute to this was the fact that, in so many cases, while one parent was a Christian, the other was not. A Christian mother might desire to have her children baptized, but a heathen father might object; and so numbers of children, though surrounded by Christian influences, and standing in some measure within the sphere of the Church, might grow up unbaptized side by side with other children who had received baptism in their infancy.[1] The inevitable conditions of Church life in the midst of a pagan or semi-pagan society would thus necessarily postpone the day when infant baptism became the invariable rule.

But now we have to remark that it does not follow from all that has been said that infant baptism can justly be described as unscriptural. Rather it must be maintained that if the apostles were not led to practise it in the first days of the Church, that was because the conditions were still lacking which would have made it perfectly appropriate. For baptism not being a thing of magic, but essentially a representative act, and infant baptism in particular being

[1] Cf. the analogous case, from the point of view of ancient law, of a Christian slave. Anrich (*Mysterienwesen*, p. 178) quotes the following from the Canons of Hippolytus:—"If one is a slave of a heathen master, he is not to receive baptism contrary to the will of his master; let him be content with being a Christian." The sentence is further suggestive as showing that essential Christianity was not held to depend upon being baptized.

a representative act which depends for a large part of its meaning and its benefit on the presuppositions, not only of a Christian home, but of a Christian Church and a Christian society, that shall all be answerable for the religious nurture of the child, it seems permissible to hold that until these conditions had all in some measure been provided, infant baptism would have been out of place. But when that time arrived, and when Christian men came to reflect upon the position of children in the Christian community, and upon the teaching of Jesus and His apostles regarding them, it was seen that there were good and sufficient grounds for admitting the children of Christian parents to the privileges of the sacrament. Even if the practice did not originate in the apostolic age, which, however, it may have done, this would not invalidate the baptism of infants, or justify us in describing it as unscriptural. We might as well say that those organisations of the Church which are a natural and inevitable consequence of its growth, and the principles of which lie clearly before us in the New Testament, are unscriptural because the apostles left the question of organisation so largely in a fluid state. We might as well say that because Peter and Paul never dreamed that their writings would by and by be regarded as Sacred Scripture, and they themselves set upon a higher level of inspiration than prophets and psalmists of old, it is therefore a falling away from apostolic teaching to entertain the conception of a New Testament Canon of Scripture. Looking at the matter in the broad light of Christian history, we seem to be abundantly justified in holding that infant baptism is not only a seemly and a beautiful rite, but one that rests firmly upon a scriptural foundation.

(1) One strong ground in Scripture for the practice lies in the organic continuity of the two dispensations, and the correspondence in principle of baptism to circumcision. All through the New Testament there runs the thought

of a continuity between the old dispensation and the new. We see it suggested in the words of Jesus, "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. viii. 11). To Peter and the first apostles Christianity was just the realisation of the blessings that had been promised to the fathers (Acts ii. 17 ff.). Paul represents the Gentiles as being grafted into the old olive tree (Rom. xi. 17 ff.), and declares that through faith we become heirs of the promises made to Abraham (Gal. iii. 14). In like manner he speaks of believers as the true circumcision (Phil. iii. 3), and in one case even traces an analogy in respect of doctrinal meaning between circumcision and baptism (Col. ii. 11, 12). No doubt, to the first Christians the full truth of the relation between the old and the new was not yet manifest. It was not until the shadows of doom had fallen upon Jerusalem and the temple that it began to dawn on the minds of Jewish Christendom that the old dispensation was for ever and utterly done away. Previous to that time they continued to circumcise their children and to observe all the ordinances of the law of Israel (cf. Acts xxi. 21). And even Paul, with all his wonderful liberality to those of Gentile birth, maintained the advantage for the Jew of circumcision, and clung personally to the religious customs of his fathers (Rom. iii. 1 ff., ix. 3 ff.; Acts xxviii. 17). All this may help to explain to us how it was that infant baptism was not practised at the beginning. When it is said that Jewish Christians, accustomed as they had been to see their children circumcised, would have claimed baptism as a natural right, it is perhaps forgotten that the first Jewish Christians may not have thought of claiming the new ordinance for their children precisely because they still practised the old one. They still regarded circumcision as a definite sign and seal of the divine covenant set upon their male children. And

as for the special blessings which belonged to those who had trusted in Christ, they would consider that the share of the children in these was sufficiently guaranteed by their organic relation to their parents,—a relation on which so much stress had always been laid in the history of the Jewish religion, and which had been adequate to secure the covenant blessings for the female members of the family, to whom the rite of circumcision did not apply. As for the Gentiles, again, not having been accustomed to any such thing as circumcision, they would not naturally in the first case draw any kind of argument from it. But after the destruction of the temple, it became apparent that while the new dispensation was continuous with the old, it was not merely something superadded to it or grafted on to it, but something which, while growing out of it, had also outgrown it altogether. In the words of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, men learned to say, "In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away" (Heb. viii. 13). So circumcision gradually fell into utter disuse in the Christian Church; and it was then, perhaps, that the divine provision of baptism to supersede it in the case of children as well as of adults began to be appreciated in Jewish-Christian circles. And here, as at so many other points, the superiority of the new over the old became apparent. For while baptism was as applicable to the case of children as circumcision had been, it was wider and more gracious in its scope. It was only male children of whom the earlier rite took cognisance, but in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female, and the seal of the new and better covenant could be applied to all the children of believers without distinction. And if the Jewish section of the Church was brought to a fuller understanding of the rite by their own national experiences, the Gentile section would gradually be led in the same

direction, not only by the example of their Jewish brethren, and the growing appreciation that was felt of the truth that the revelation of the Old Testament was a revelation for the Gentile as well as for the Jew, so that circumcision had its meaning and its message even for those who had never themselves been circumcised, but by the inherent reasonableness and spiritual beauty of the rite as applied to the children of believers, its appeal to the deepest instincts of Christian parents, and, above all, its harmony with the teaching of Jesus and His apostles as to the rightful place of little children, not only in the kingdom of God, but in the visible Church of Christ.

(2) This brings us to another scriptural ground for infant baptism, lying in Christ's attitude to little children and His utterances regarding them. In the words of institution, as we have seen, there is nothing that is inconsistent with the baptism of young children. And when we go back to the record of our Lord's life and study His dealings with the little ones, there seems to be much that goes to establish a presumptive claim on their behalf to the benefits of the sacrament. It is not necessary to refer to the cases in detail.[1] We need only recall the most striking occasion of all, when Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God (Luke xviii. 16). Now, if these words have any meaning, they imply that little children are capable of regeneration, and that by Christ's blessing upon them they may become members of the kingdom of God. But this being so, the question at once forces itself upon us, Why should the sign of the covenant of grace be withheld from any who are already members of that covenant? "Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" No doubt it may be said that while little children

[1] See Matt. xviii. 1 ff., xix. 14 and parallels, xxi. 16; John xxi. 15.

are capable of regeneration, and while many of them are actually regenerate, we cannot tell in any particular case whether an infant is regenerated or not. But the same thing has to be said of adults. If the state of infancy is not a security for regeneration, neither is the fact of a profession of faith. Ananias and Sapphira professed their faith, and were baptized. So also was it with Simon Magus. And as we read the New Testament Epistles, we come upon many a lament over one and another who had professed and called themselves Christians, but afterwards had fallen away from Christ. And yet the propriety of baptizing all those who in apparent sincerity confess their faith is not questioned, nor does any one propose to readminister the rite in cases where one who has been baptized on false pretences experiences at a later stage a genuine conversion. Now this implies, on the part of Baptists as well as Pædobaptists, an admission of the truth that "the efficacy of baptism," as the Westminster Confession puts it, "is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered."[1] And if this is the case, there appears to be no adequate reason why baptism should be withheld from infant children, at all events from the infant children of those who undertake to make it their constant task to bring up their little ones "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." If some of these children, through God's mysterious and prevenient grace, are regenerated previous to baptism, they have as good a claim as any one to the seal of the divine covenant. If some of them are never regenerated at all, that is only what unfortunately happens likewise in the case of some who come to baptism as adults. And if in many cases regeneration does not take place till a much later period, the same thing has to be said also of some who are baptized as adults without having yielded their hearts to Christ, and who do not experience the

[1] *Confession of Faith*, xxviii. 6.

regenerating power of the Holy Spirit until a later day of grace.

(3) Another ground for infant baptism, rooted in the very principles of Scripture, is suggested by the language which Paul uses with regard to the children of the Christian Church. For example, there is the way in which he addresses them, side by side with their parents, as standing within the sphere of the Church. This is frequently adduced as a proof that the children so addressed must have been previously baptized. In view, however, of the lack of any positive evidence that it was Paul's usual practice to baptize children, it can hardly be regarded as proving this. But, at all events, it goes to establish a claim for the sacrament on behalf of the children, whether that claim was pressed by the apostle or not. For if the children are expressly included in letters addressed to "the saints,"[1] and are regarded as partakers of the consecration that belongs to Christ's chosen ones, there seems to be no proper reason for refusing them the especial sign of consecration.

Then, in particular, we have Paul's very striking utterance in the seventh chapter of 1 Corinthians with regard to the "holiness" that belongs to the children of Christian parents (ver. 14). He is dealing in this passage with the subject of mixed marriages, and is maintaining that the marriage of a Christian with a non-Christian is not to be lightly dissolved, inasmuch as the closeness of the marriage tie causes the Christian partner to communicate to the heathen one something of his or her own "holiness" or consecration to God. And in support of this argument he appeals, as to an undoubted fact, to the "holiness" that belongs to children in virtue of their birth from Christian parents.[2] Observe that it is their birth of which he speaks,

[1] Compare Eph. i. 1 with vi. 1–3; and Col. i. 2 with iii. 20.

[2] Paul's argument in this verse is often quite misunderstood, and it is supposed that he means to say that since a heathen partner is consecrated by a Christian one, the children of such mixed marriages are consecrated also. But this makes

not their baptism; and there is certainly much force in the argument that if infant baptism had been customary at that time, Paul would have made reference to it as the mark of the children's consecration; so that this verse may afford a fresh proof that infants were not baptized by Paul. But if the children of Christians are holy, in the sense of being consecrated to God, by the very fact of their birth into a Christian family, we have here a principle out of which infant baptism naturally springs, whether this application of it was made by Paul or not.[1] If the children of Christian people are consecrated to God from their birth, even as Jewish children were, it seems to follow that they are entitled to receive the appropriate seal of consecration, just as Jewish male children received it.[2]

(4) Yet another ground for infant baptism is to be found in its harmony with the general teaching of Scripture regarding the doctrines of grace, and its fitness to bring this teaching impressively before the Church, and in due time before the baptized child himself. We assume that it is the teaching of Scripture that children share in the corrup-

him assume, to begin with, that a heathen is consecrated through the fact of being united in marriage to a Christian—the very point that he wishes to prove. Further, it restricts his reference to the children of mixed marriages, of whom, quite evidently, he is not specially thinking; note the words *τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν*. What the apostle really does here is to argue that the "holiness" of the children of Christians, in virtue of their organic relation to their parents, a "holiness" which he takes for granted, points correspondingly to the consecrating power of one Christian life over another that is bound to it in the deep and subtle relations of matrimony.

[1] Neander says: "In the point of view here chosen by Paul, we find (although it testifies against the existence of infant baptism) the fundamental idea from which infant baptism was afterwards necessarily developed, and by which it must be justified to agree with Paul's sentiments" (*Planting of Christianity*, i. 165).

[2] It might be said that this application of the apostle's argument would lead to the conclusion that an unbaptized man, who was not willing to make any personal profession of faith, would be entitled to baptism on the simple ground of his marriage to a Christian woman. But here, as always, the fact that we are dealing with an adult alters the situation, since, for an adult, a profession of faith is always very clearly the condition of receiving the sacrament. Cf. Cunningham, *Historical Theology*, ii. 148.

tion of the race, and so need regeneration; that they are capable of regeneration even at the very earliest stage; that God's grace is always prevenient grace, which anticipates all our willing and our working; that Christ deals with us personally, not only addressing us through the general invitations of the gospel, but coming through His Holy Spirit to each one individually and saying, "My child, give me thine heart"; that there is a covenant holiness which belongs to the child of believing parents; and that such parents are bound to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Now these, and other truths which might be mentioned, are precisely the truths that find special expression in infant baptism. And thus they give it a value of its own, differing in some respects from the value of adult baptism, which depends so largely upon personal faith. It is true, no doubt, that in the baptism of infants, who have no faith (for Luther's idea of infant faith is a pure figment), the sacrament lacks an element which is indispensable in the case of adults. But we are not justified in saying that faith is of the very essence of the ordinance itself. Even more clearly and definitely in the case of salvation than in that of baptism is faith prescribed as a necessary condition; and yet no one doubts that infants may be saved. It is justification and regeneration that are directly represented and sealed in baptism, the cleansing from guilt and the cleansing from the stain and strength of sin. And faith, as Principal Cunningham pointed out, does not stand in the same close relation to baptism as these blessings do, blessings which little children are admittedly capable of receiving; and "for this obvious and conclusive reason, that it is not directly and expressly signified or represented in the external ordinance itself, as they are."[1] But if it lacks the element of the profession of faith, which is indispensable in the case of adults, infant baptism possesses

[1] *Historical Theology*, ii. 152.

those other special aspects to which allusion has just been made; and these make it a means of grace and edification to the parents and to the Church, and in due season to the baptized children themselves. To true Christian parents it always brings a stirring and searching of the heart, and a summons to high ideals of family living—the very soil out of which a child's Christianity grows. To the witnessing Church, whose presence is surely implied in a proper conception of the ordinance as an admission into the visible fellowship of Christ, it is a means of grace more effective often than the best of sermons. Very specially is this true in the case of the children who are present at any service at which the sacrament is administered. Upon them it certainly makes a deep impression, as every observant person can testify; and it opens their hearts in a peculiar manner to the entrance of instruction as to the meaning of the rite and their own relation to it in the past and in the present. And to the baptized child himself it becomes a means of conscious blessing, as in after years he turns back to it in thought and sees in it the sacrament of his calling and of his initiation into the visible Church. It speaks to him of God's love in Christ, and of Christ's personal approach and call to him as an individual through the sacrament of His own appointing. And so it summons him continually to make his calling and election sure.

All this may be said, while yet it can never be professed that baptism is an indispensable means of salvation. We freely admit that the lessons which underlie the sacrament are often received and carried out far more consistently by parents who believe that their children should not be baptized in infancy, than by others who bring their children to the ordinance as a matter of course. The Baptist protest against formal and superstitious ideas regarding infant baptism was not unneeded when it was first made; in many quarters it is needed still. It is true, no doubt, that the

sacrament, like the word, retains its own inherent value in any circumstances; but as the word preached does not profit unless it is mixed with faith in them that hear it, so also there is little advantage in infant baptism when a child is brought to the sacrament by faithless parents, and when neither the parents nor the Church give any securities for the early implanting of Christ in its heart. None the less, in a Church made up of Christian families, infant baptism must remain the normal and ideal procedure.[1] And when little children in this way are brought to Jesus and laid, as it were, upon His knees, and then are held there day by day in ardent faith and hope and prayer, there will surely be a fulfilling of the promise, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." Such children will often grow up as true lambs of Christ's flock—not needing in after years to be converted, as seems to be assumed when they are denied the right to baptism until they have attained to adult age, but abiding all along within the fold of the Good Shepherd. And so through their baptism they will be rightful members of Christ's Church, inasmuch as they are already members of God's kingdom.

II. From the subjects of baptism we now pass to the *mode* of its administration. Within the New Testament itself there are three lines of evidence that have to be considered: (1) The meaning of the verb *βαπτίζω* and of the nouns derived from it; (2) the narratives of actual cases of baptism; and (3) any allusions to the form of the sacrament that appear to be made in the course of expositions of its doctrinal significance.

(1) As regards the term *βαπτίζω*, no one questions that its primary and classical signification is to immerse. It is evident, however, that in the New Testament it is not used like the verb *βάπτω* simply in this literal and general meaning, but has come to bear a technical religious sense,

[1] Cf. Kaftan, *Dogmatik*, p. 609.

in which, while its primary idea may never be lost, the real stress falls upon its spiritual connotation as an act of ceremonial cleansing. This is shown by the fact that the theocratic ceremonies of purification are described as "divers baptisms" (διαφόροις βαπτισμοῖς, Heb. ix. 10), while βαπτίζω has come to be employed as the equivalent of the Hebrew verb רָחַץ, which is used in the Old Testament to describe the Levitical washings, and which in the Septuagint is translated by λούεσθαι.[1] The same thing follows from the circumstance that βαπτίζω, as applied both to the baptism of John and the later Christian baptism, is used absolutely, *i.e.* without the addition of any qualifying or descriptive phrase, and precisely as we use the word baptize. "John came," we read, "who baptized in the wilderness"; "they then that received his word were baptized"; "I baptized also the household of Stephanas." To substitute the word "immerse" for the word "baptize" in statements like these would be to rob them of their most specific meaning. Whether βαπτίζω and its corresponding substantives are ever used in the New Testament apart from the primary thought of immersion, is a point that is disputed.[2] But whichever view is taken, the fact is not affected that the form of the action is altogether subordinate to its ceremonial meaning as an act of symbolical cleansing.

(2) As regards the various instances of the actual

[1] See Mark vii. 4; Luke xi. 38; Heb. ix. 10. Cf. Cremer's *Lexicon*, *s.v.* βαπτίζω.

[2] It is strongly held by some scholars that the ceremonial "baptism" before meat of which we read in Mark vii. 4 and Luke xi. 38 was nothing more than a washing of the hands (so Lightfoot, Alford, and many others); while the hand-washing, again, would seem to have been by pouring, and not by immersion (see Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, ii. 10–11; Professor A. S. Peake, *Dictionary of the Bible*, iv. 833). On the other hand, some of the ablest critical writers maintain that the idea of immersion is never absent when βαπτίζω is used in the N.T. This is Meyer's position in his notes on Mark vii. 4 and Luke xi. 38. And Dr. Schaff (*Oldest Church Manual*, p. 50) quotes an emphatic testimony to the same effect from a letter by Harnack.

administration of the rite, whether by John the Baptist or Christ's disciples, the statements made cannot be said to be decisive either one way or another. The fact that we read of baptism in a river or pool, taken in connection with the strict meaning of *βαπτίζω*, would certainly favour the thought of immersion; although, no doubt, it is true that a candidate for baptism might stand in the shallow part of a stream or wayside pond, while the water was poured over his head—a form of baptism which appears to be represented in some of the early catacomb paintings.[1] A great deal has sometimes been made of the presumed improbability that there would be a sufficient supply of water in Jerusalem to permit of the immersion of three thousand persons on the day of Pentecost, or that the jailor of Philippi would be provided with a bath or tank in which he and his household could be immersed on the spot. But it is evident that such considerations are too purely hypothetical to count for much in the way of serious argument.

(3) When we come to the third line of evidence, however, the view that immersion was the original method of baptism finds a very strong support in a figure which Paul uses both in Romans and Colossians in connection with a doctrinal reference to the sacrament (Rom. vi. 3–5; Col. ii. 12). He speaks of baptism as a burial with Christ into death, and a rising again with Him from the grave. Undoubtedly this shows that immersion was the usual mode of administering the rite as known to Paul. On the other hand, it is too much to say that Paul's language here proves that there is a depth of spiritual significance in the twofold act of immersion and emersion which makes it an essential part of the ordinance, so that any other method of baptism must necessarily be invalid or defective. For we are hardly entitled to say that the apostle's figure was anything more than a striking way of illustrating a mystical thought that

[1] See Schaff, *op. cit.*, chap. xvi. "The Didaché and the Catacombs."

was altogether his own. The great mass of the New Testament evidence goes to show that the idea of cleansing is the primary idea in the symbolism of baptism. The thought of a being buried with Christ is nowhere found except in these two Pauline passages. And the ideas of cleansing and burial are so different from each other that it is difficult, as the late Professor Candlish has said, to suppose "that the same rite was designed directly and properly to represent them both"; and so the probability is that the comparison of baptism to a death and burial and resurrection with Christ "is merely an incidental allusion, and not the direct and principal signification of the rite." [1]

Taken as a whole, then, it would seem that the New Testament evidence is strongly in favour of immersion as the ordinary apostolic mode of baptism; while, on the other hand, there is little to lead us to think that the mode was ever treated as an absolute ceremonial necessity which could yield neither to time, place, nor circumstance, so that, for example, if water was scarce, or if a candidate's state of health did not permit of his immersion, the act of baptism and admission to the Church could not take place.[2] And this conclusion is remarkably confirmed by the witness of the *Didaché*. With regard to the mode of baptism, the prescriptions of the *Didaché* are as follow: "Baptize ye into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, in living (*i.e.* running) water. And if thou hast not living water, baptize into other water; and if thou canst not in cold, then in warm. But if thou hast neither, pour water thrice upon the head into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (vii. 1–3). The triple pouring and the implied triple immersion, or trine immersion, as it is commonly called, need not at present

[1] *The Christian Salvation*, p. 145.

[2] See some excellent remarks of Alford on Col. ii. 12.

detain us. It was meant to be a symbol of the threefold name into which the believer was baptized. In itself it may be an impressive expression of Trinitarian doctrine, but there is nothing in the New Testament to lead us to think that it formed a part of the primitive manner of administering the rite. But here we have immersion plainly laid down as the rule for the observance of the sacrament; since the latter part of the prescription would have absolutely no meaning unless the pouring which is there sanctioned were contrasted with immersion as the regular method. And yet it is just as plain that pouring is here specified as a perfectly legitimate form of baptism, if the means of immersion are not at hand. The significance of this is apparent. It shows beyond contradiction that when the *Didaché* was compiled, and presumably at a still earlier time, while immersion was the rule, it was not an invariable rule; but that baptism by pouring was quite customary in certain circumstances.[1]

A century and a half later, in the time of Cyprian, we find that the rule about immersion had become more rigid. Baptism by pouring or aspersion was now confined to the case of the sick, and was hence called clinical baptism. And in the minds of many persons the idea prevailed that such baptisms were not altogether valid, so that those who had been admitted to the Church in this way were spoken of disparagingly as *clinici*. Cyprian sets himself to combat this idea, and affirms that where necessity compels the outward abridgment of the usual form, God bestows His blessing none the less upon those who are faithful.[2] It is to be noted, moreover, with regard to the widely prevalent disparagement of the *clinici*, that

[1] Cf. Harnack's remark on this passage: "We have here the oldest witness for the permissibility of baptism by aspersion. Specially important is it that the author does not betray the least hesitation as to its validity" (*Lehre der Zwölf Apostel*, p. 23).

[2] Ep. 76, *ad Magnum*.

it apparently rested not so much on the notion that the mode of aspersion was in itself defective, as on a suspicion of the sincerity of the motives of those who only professed their faith upon a sick-bed. This is clearly brought out by the decision of the twelfth canon of the Council which met at Neo-Cæsarea in 314. In this canon restrictions are placed on the ordination to the priesthood of any who have only received clinical baptism; but this is done on the sole ground that such persons have professed their faith under compulsion (*i.e.* through fear of death), and not from free conviction.[1] While immersion, therefore, was the ordinary rule of the early Church, as it continued to be the rule of the Western Church for many centuries, and has been the rule of the Eastern Church all along, it seems evident that it was not looked upon as a rule that was absolutely unbending, so that the validity of the sacrament was determined by it. And if there was a measure of liberty in this matter at the beginning of the second century, it is extremely unlikely that there would be less liberty in the age of the apostles, the whole tendency of the Church in the sub-apostolic period being towards fixity rather than towards freedom in matters of ritual.

Reading the New Testament usages, therefore, in the light of the following time, we seem to find abundant justification for the more liberal rubrics of Protestantism and modern Catholicism, according to which immersion, pouring, and sprinkling are all legitimate, and the precise mode of baptism is left to be decided by considerations of convenience, safety, propriety, and edification.[2] It is noticeable

[1] See Neander, *Church History* (Clark's Edition), i. 324.

[2] The Westminster Confession simply declares that immersion is not necessary, and that pouring or sprinkling is sufficient (xxviii. 3). The baptismal service of the Church of England really prescribes immersion in the case of infants, unless the parents certify that the child is too weak to bear it (*Book of Common Prayer*, *ad locum*). As a matter of fact, immersion has long ceased to be the practice of the Anglican Church; and it has often been remarked as curious that the ritualistic party should have made no attempt to revive a usage which is not

that in the *Didaché* there is not only a concession to the difficulty of providing a sufficient quantity of water, but also a concession to the interests of health and comfort in the permission to use warm water. It is nothing more than an application to much wider circumstances of this same wise spirit of adaptation, when the mode of baptism is adjusted to the vast differences in climate, dress, social custom, and sense of what is becoming, that necessarily belong to a Church which lasts through all the centuries and spreads through all the world. In regard to externals, our observance of the Lord's Supper deviates in many ways from the Supper of the Master in the upper room. In particular, we have divorced our Communion service from that social meal with which it was originally associated, and with which, under the name of the Agapé, it continued to be associated for a time in the Early Church. We do not imagine that by so doing we have abandoned anything that is absolutely essential to the proper celebration of the sacrament. And in the case of baptism, it does not seem to be a departure from the New Testament type to maintain that the rite is adequately performed so long as the mode of observance brings out fully what appears to be the essential part of its symbolism, its representation, namely, by the application of water, of Christ's gracious power to cleanse us from our sins. Merely to wash one's hands was an ancient way of declaring one's entire innocence (Matt. xxvii. 24). The sprinkling of a few drops of blood was a recognised means of ceremonial cleansing (Lev. xiv. 6, 7). The gift of a new heart and a right spirit is associated by the prophet with the sprinkling of clean water (Ezek. xxxvi. 25). The baptism of the Spirit, of which we read so often in the New Testament, is conceived of not as an immersion in

only prescribed in the Prayer Book, but was undoubtedly the ordinary procedure in the Early Church. Cf. Dr. H. R. Percival, *Nineteenth Century*, Oct. 1901, p. 621.

the Spirit, but as an outpouring of the Spirit from above (Acts ii. 17, x. 45). These facts all go to show that the immersion of the whole body is by no means necessary in order to symbolise the idea of complete cleansing. And while it must be admitted that, of the various modes of baptism, total immersion is the one which was ordinarily practised in the primitive Church, and the one which most vividly portrays our cleansing through Christ's grace in body and in spirit, it must be claimed at the same time that if pouring and sprinkling sufficiently set forth the meaning of the rite, and if on other grounds they are found to be most suitable to our altered circumstances, our Christian liberty entitles us to make use of them in the administration of the sacrament.

III. Leaving now the question of mode, we come to consider the *administrator* of baptism. So far as can be gathered from the New Testament, the ordinance was one which might be administered by private members of the Church. Doubtless the privileges of private members in this respect would generally be exercised with some supervision on the part of the apostles or other office-bearers of the community; but, at all events, it does not appear that ordination was considered a necessary qualification for the proper performance of the rite. It is a disputed point whether the commission given by the Lord, as reported at the end of Matthew, was addressed to the Eleven alone or to a much larger body of the disciples. But in any case it cannot be doubted that the commission was not meant only for the apostles. It is plain that with regard to the most important part of it, that part, namely, which bore upon the proclamation of the gospel, every disciple of Jesus felt himself under a personal responsibility. We read, for example, at the beginning of the eighth chapter of Acts, that in the days of the persecution which followed the death of Stephen

the members of the Church were scattered abroad, "except the apostles"; and "they that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word" (vers. 1, 4). And if this was the view taken of the principal part of the Lord's commission, it would be altogether unnatural to fasten upon the baptism which was associated with disciple-making, and to elevate that into a peculiar apostolic function. With respect to what took place on the day of Pentecost, nothing is said as to how the three thousand were baptized. If this great number of persons was baptized by immersion, the task can hardly have been accomplished by the apostles alone; and at that time there were no other office-bearers among the one hundred and twenty disciples of whom the original community was composed. We know for a certainty that at a later stage baptism, so far from being regarded as the special prerogative of an apostle, was frequently, if not usually, left by the apostles to other persons. This was Paul's way at Corinth, as has been noticed already. And when Peter in the house of Cornelius commanded the centurion and his friends to be baptized, the rite must have been administered by some of the brethren from Joppa who had accompanied him to Cæsarea (Acts x. 23, 48); and none of these, so far as we are aware, were either presbyters or deacons. When Paul was baptized, it is not explicitly stated that this was done by Ananias; but that certainly is the natural meaning of the narrative, and the meaning which is assumed by every one to be correct. And Ananias is described as "a certain disciple at Damascus" (Acts ix. 10), and "a devout man according to the law" (Acts xxii. 12); expressions which do not warrant us in concluding that he was anything more than an ordinary member of the Christian community. Worthy of notice, too, as suggesting that baptism was not looked upon as the special function of ordained officials, is the fact that

in nearly every case the narratives of particular baptisms are given in the passive form. We are not told who it was that administered the rite to certain converts, but simply that these converts "were baptized" (Acts *passim*).[1]

So far the New Testament. And now if we look beyond it for some confirmatory evidence as to the practice of the apostolic age, we find that the witness of the *Didaché* is again very important. For if in the time of the apostles the act had been confined to ordained persons, it would hardly have been possible that such an arrangement should be ignored in a manual the very existence of which is a testimony to the gradual transition that was taking place from the spiritual freedom of the first days to a certain fixity of liturgical form. But the *Didaché* does not contain the slightest suggestion that baptism was of the nature of a clerical function. "Now concerning baptism," it begins, "baptize ye thus" (vii. 1); the directions are just as general as those we find elsewhere in the same book on the subject of prayer or fasting or hospitality. It is an almost inevitable inference that, in the view of the writer, baptism might legitimately be performed by an ordinary member of the Church.[2] Ignatius, again, whose *Epistles* were probably written about the same time as the *Didaché* or shortly after, has nothing to contradict what has just been said. For while he declares that "It is not lawful without the bishop either to baptize or to celebrate the Agapé," this does not by any means imply that it is necessary for the bishop to administer baptism personally. On the contrary, the very next words are, "Whatsoever he (*i.e.* the bishop) shall approve of, that is also pleasing to God, so that everything that

[1] Cf. the remarks on this point of the Bishop of Salisbury in his *Episcopate of Charles Wordsworth*, p. 60.

[2] Cf. Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 184. Similarly Harnack says, "An alle Christen ist das Folgende gerichtet; der Verf. wendet sich nicht an bestimmte Personen" (*Lehre der Zwölf Apostel*, p. 22).

is done may be secure and valid." [1] And so the statement is nothing more than an insistence that in the interests of Church order the sacrament shall not be observed without the permission of the presiding officer of the community, and by no means a claim that baptism in itself is a clerical, much less a sacerdotal function. In Justin's account of baptism, towards the middle of the second century, no hint is given that the rite was performed by any particular individual.[2] And Tertullian, again, in his treatise on baptism, which was written at the very beginning of the third century, but previous to his becoming a Montanist, while holding that in the interests of good order the privilege of baptizing should be restricted to the office-bearers of the Church, and ordinarily to the bishop, expressly grants that laymen have the right to perform it when bishops, priests, or deacons are not at hand, "inasmuch as what all in common have received, may be dispensed by all in common." [3]

It would be going beyond the proper scope of these lectures to enter with any fulness into the later history of the question. But, as bearing upon the doctrinal significance of the sacrament, this curious fact may be noted, that in proportion as the tendency grew to regard baptism as the means of regeneration, and to attach a magical efficacy to the use of the correct forms, the Catholic Church was driven, by the stress of the practical interests which are involved in the tremendous claim that baptism is necessary to salvation, to lower the standard of administration. And so it came to be held that in case of need the sacrament might be administered not merely by any member of the Church, but by any person whatsoever, man or woman, orthodox or heretic, Christian or Jew; and even words repeated in sport by boys at play, as in the case of the youthful Athanasius and his companions

[1] *Ad Smyrn.* viii. 2. [2] *Apol.* i. 61. [3] *De Baptismo,* xvii.

on the seashore at Alexandria, according to the well-known story of Rufinus, constituted a valid act of baptism, as much as if they had been pronounced by the Bishop of Rome himself.[1] This looseness in the administration of baptism, ratified as it eventually was by the Council of Trent, is nothing less than a *reductio ad absurdum* of the Catholic doctrine of the sacrament. It shows how that doctrine breaks to pieces, and dissolves into a fine mist, when it strikes upon the rock facts of human nature. For while it proclaims that baptism is the means of regeneration and the only door of salvation, it is compelled, by the clamant demands of human hearts, that the gate of heaven shall not be shut in the face of the dying through lack of an outward rite, to declare that the awful grace of the sacrament may be transmitted by one who has no grace of his own either personal or official, nor even the least pretension to any faith in Jesus Christ. In this way baptism is really evacuated of the mysterious content which had previously been imported into it, a fact that is practically admitted when confirmation is brought in as a new sacrament to supply the defects of the earlier one. It must be added that an inconsistency from an opposite direction sometimes appears in the utterances of those who do not regard baptism as essential to salvation, or as a priestly function in any peculiar sense. For they, nevertheless, describe the sacrament as invalid unless it is performed by an ordained minister.[2] Well, no doubt it is

[1] Cf. Schaff-Herzog, *Encyclopædia*, i. 200; Stanley, *Christian Institutions*, p. 17; Allen, *Christian Institutions*, p. 403.

[2] Dr. Charles Hodge indicates, though somewhat timidly, his doubts as to the correctness of this position (*The Church and its Polity*, pp. 199–200). As he shows, there is very little in the Westminster Standards to justify it. The definition of baptism in the *Confession of Faith* (xxviii. 1) says nothing about the administrator. And while in the chapter on sacraments generally we are told that "neither sacrament may be dispensed by any but by a minister of the word lawfully ordained" (xxvii. 4), this is no more than seems to be implied with regard to preaching by the expression "a minister of the word lawfully

proper in an organised Church that in the interests of unity, decency, and order the sacrament should only be administered, unless in very exceptional circumstances, by a duly recognised official of the Church; but in view of what appears to have been the apostolic practice, it must be maintained that baptism by a Christian layman, however irregular from the point of view of Church procedure, is not invalid in the proper sense of the word.

IV. We now come, finally, to the question of the baptismal *formula*. In an earlier lecture the words of the formula at the end of Matthew's Gospel were discussed from the point of view of the critical objections that have been raised to their genuineness and authenticity. Those objections, as we saw, rest upon grounds of a very *a priori* character, and cannot be regarded as by any means conclusive. But assuming now that the words were spoken by Jesus, we have to account for what seems to be an omission on the part of the apostles to make use of them in connection with their own observance of the baptismal rite. For the triple formula of Matthew xxviii. 19 is found nowhere else in the New Testament, nor is there the slightest allusion to it in connection with any references that are made to the subject of baptism; while, on the other hand, we meet again and again with a baptism into the name of Jesus Christ, or into the name of the Lord Jesus, or simply into Christ. A frequently suggested explanation is that the Trinitarian formula would really be used by the apostles all along, and that when we read of baptism into the name of Jesus Christ, this is not a statement as to a formula which was employed, but only a designation of baptism as Christian baptism.[1] In support of this view, it may be said that when Paul

ordained." From the point of view of the Westminster divines, the preaching of a layman in the ordinary services of the Church might be irregular, but who would venture to call it invalid?

[1] So, *e.g.*, Plummer, *Dictionary of the Bible*, i. 241 f.

speaks of baptism into Christ (Rom. vi. 3; Gal. iii. 27), any reference to the triple formula would be entirely out of place, inasmuch as he is dealing specifically with the relation of baptism to the death of Christ, or to faith in Christ. He is speaking of the sacrament, that is, not with reference to its liturgical form, but as regards certain aspects of its doctrinal meaning; and in particular, he is setting it in a doctrinal relation to Jesus Christ Himself, so that any mention of the other Persons of the Trinity would be entirely inappropriate. And as for the various passages in Acts where we read of baptism into the name of Jesus Christ, or of the Lord Jesus, it may be exegetically legitimate to say that these expressions do not necessarily do more than signify the fact that baptism was administered on confession of the name of Jesus as Lord and Christ, so that they simply designate the sacrament as Christian baptism, without any reference to the formula that would be employed.[1] This explanation, it may be added, finds some additional support in the fact that the *Didaché* twice over gives the precise Trinitarian formula in the liturgical directions for baptism in chapter vii., while in chapter ix. it specifies that only those are to sit down at the Lord's Table "who have been baptized into the name of the Lord." It is impossible to suppose that in these two chapters the *Didaché* is speaking of two different formulas. Clearly the Trinitarian formula is the one which it prescribes; the instruction to pour water upon the head three times (vii. 3) raises this beyond the possibility of doubt. And when it is said in the later chapter that the partakers of the Lord's Table must first have been baptized into the name of the Lord, this is no more than an announcement that those who partake of the Eucharist must previously have made a profession of Christ, and have been admitted into the community by baptism.

[1] Cf. Rackham, *Acts*, p. 32 ff.

Exegetically, then, and apart from historical considerations, this view of the case appears to be very reasonable. But when we find Stephen of Rome, in his controversy with Cyprian towards the middle of the third century, successfully vindicating his contention that those who have been baptized simply into the name of Christ do not need to be rebaptized; and Ambrose, more than a century later, justifying baptism into the name of Christ alone, on the ground that in naming Christ we are really naming the other two Persons of the Trinity, "inasmuch as the name is one and the power is one,"[1] it is difficult to resist the conclusion that from the first there must have existed in the Early Church the tradition of a baptism by the use of the simpler formula. For it is exceedingly unlikely, in view of the development during the early centuries in the doctrine of the Trinity, that if the Trinitarian formula had been regularly employed in the apostolic age, the shorter formula would have come into use at a later time. Read, accordingly, in the light of subsequent history, it seems reasonable to regard the constant references in Acts to baptism into the name of Christ as pointing to a corresponding formula that was actually employed. And yet this does not go to prove that our Lord did not speak the words attributed to Him at the end of Matthew's Gospel.[2] Rather it shows that in the early days of Christianity little importance was attached to the question of a formula, provided it was made clear when any one was baptized what Christian baptism really meant and what it implied. It is in keeping with this conclusion when we find that, even as regards the shorter form, there is no trace of anything like a rigid fixity. Men were baptized into the name of Jesus Christ, or into the name of the Lord Jesus, or even, it may be, into

[1] *De Spiritu Sancto.*

[2] Cf. on this point what has been said already in Lect. II.; p. 49 ff.

the name simply of Christ.[1] And as there was no fixity in regard to the name, just as little was there in regard to the precise relation to the name as expressed by the preposition; for εἰς and ἐν and ἐπί are all employed.[2] Indeed, even as regards the Trinitarian formula itself, it is worth noting that while it occurs in the *Didaché* in precisely the same form as in Matthew, the references to it in Justin Martyr and Tertullian do not suggest a careful adherence to an exact verbal form. Justin gives it after a paraphrastic fashion,[3] while Tertullian associates the name of the Church with the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.[4] And in the Syrian Church an enlarged version of the formula appears to have been in use, similar to that of Tertullian.[5] All this goes to show that it is contrary to what we can discover with respect to the teaching of the New Testament, and contrary also to the evidence which comes from the early Church, to imagine that the efficacy or value of baptism hangs upon the employment of any fixed form of words. The majestic formula with which we are so familiar, is doubtless sanctioned by the words in which Jesus summed up the essential content of His gospel at the time when He appointed baptism to be the special sign of Christian discipleship, and sanctioned also by the early liturgical adoption of these words in the universal Church, and their use in Christian history ever since. But to turn that formula into a kind of magic "Abracadabra" would be contrary to the very spirit of the Christian religion. Even to this day, it may be pointed out, it is a disputed point whether we should baptize in the name or into the name.

[1] See 1 Cor. i. 13, which suggests a baptism into the name of Christ.

[2] The variety of expressions as regards both the name and the relation to the name may be seen from the following:—ἐπὶ (or ἐν) τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, Acts ii. 38; εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, Acts viii. 16, xix. 5; ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Κυρίου, Acts x. 48; εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, Rom. vi. 3; εἰς Χριστόν, Gal. iii. 27.

[3] *Apol.* i. 61.

[4] *De Baptismo*, vi.

[5] See Scholten, *Die Taufformel*, p. 39.

"In the name" is the old form among us, sanctioned by the usage of the Church from Old Catholic times, through what was probably a mistranslation in the Vulgate. But εἰς in Greek is generally admitted to mean "into" and not "in";[1] and so "into the name" would be the most correct form, seldom as it is actually employed. With regard to this whole question of the formula, however, we must hold with Stephen of Rome rather than with Cyprian of Carthage. Adherence to a liturgical rubric is no doubt proper for the sake of uniformity in an organised Church; but where the washing of water is administered in faith, with the design of "signifying, sealing, and applying" the benefits of the covenant of grace, the precise language of the formula is a matter of secondary moment.

We have dealt in this lecture with the subjects, mode, administrator, and formula of baptism. And we have done so, primarily, because these are matters which have an independent interest of their own in any study of New Testament teaching upon the sacraments. But, as we have seen in passing, much that we learn about these topics has a very close bearing upon the still more important questions which have been discussed in previous lectures as to the essential significance and value of the rite. What strikes us all through the New Testament is the spirit of freedom in everything that concerns this sacrament. It is faith that is paramount, not form; the inward, not the outward; the spirit, and not the letter. The full value of the rite must always be conditioned by faith in the recipient, a future faith if not a present faith. And the true baptism, the only baptism that can bring God's grace into the heart, is the baptism of the Spirit and not the baptism of water. Baptism is no cabalistic rite, depending for its virtue upon

[1] See, however, Dean Armitage Robinson in his article "Baptism" in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, vol. i. He holds to the translation "in the name," on the ground that the interchange of the prepositions εἰς and ἐν in late Greek can be plentifully illustrated from the N. T.

the use of certain technical words and forms, but essentially a representative one, appealing to us through the eye as the word does through the ear. Like the word, it carries within it the possibility of blessing; but its virtue is not something magical, inhering in it in any material or quasi-material fashion; it is a spiritual virtue, like the virtue of the word itself. It has its own place, and that a very important place, in the economy of the Church as well as in the life of the individual. But baptism is not regeneration. It cannot take the place of faith, or even stand for a moment beside it as a religious magnitude. It is the public and orderly recognition, by Christ's own appointment, of our membership in the visible community; but it is faith and not baptism, the Spirit and not the water, that entitles us to be called the children of God.

LECTURE VI.

The Supper of Jesus: The Historical Facts.

When we pass, in a study of the New Testament doctrine of the sacraments, from baptism to the Lord's Supper, we find ourselves entering upon a sphere of even greater difficulties and keener controversies than before. For the most part, however, the difficulties must be attributed to the controversies rather than the controversies to the difficulties: it is the manner in which the subject has been approached, and the spirit in which it has been handled, far more than its own inherent obscurity, that has led to so much dispute. A distinguished Church historian of the present day has said that "the history of the Lord's Supper is a passion-history."[1] And, indeed, it is not too much to say that the passion of Jesus has been renewed in the history of His feast of love, and the Lord Himself has been wounded continually in the house of His friends. Representatives of all schools of opinion unite in commenting upon the strangeness of the fact that the great sacrament of Christian brotherhood should have been turned, through doctrinal misunderstandings, into the worst root of bitterness and division among the followers of Christ, so that, as a recent Roman Catholic writer has put it, "instead of being a *tessara unitatis*, it has become a battlefield."[2] But while there are those who endeavour

[1] Professor Loofs, in his article "Abendmahl" in the Hauck-Herzog *Real-encyklopädie*, i. 44.

[2] W. R. Carson, *An Eucharistic Eirenicon*, p. 15.

to escape from the region of controversy by falling back upon the idea of unexplained and inexplicable mysteries, we must rather hold that it is precisely the unwarranted magnifying of the element of mystery, the turning of the simple acts and words of Jesus at the supper-table into the *mysterium tremendum* of the later Catholic Church, that has led to most of the sorrowful strife over the great sacrament of redeeming grace. Not, of course, that the element of mystery in this ordinance can ever be eliminated. The Schoolmen were right when they said that "all things pass out into a mystery."[1] And in particular there must always be an unfathomed mystery at the meeting-point of the seen and the unseen, of the human and the divine, of grace and the means of grace. We may even admit the truth of a saying of our own "Rabbi Duncan" with regard to the Lord's Supper, "Take away the mystery, and you take away the sacrament." But what we must protest against is the introduction into the Christian view of the Supper of magical and theurgic ideas of which no trace is to be found in the New Testament, and the gradual emergence of which in the later dogma of the Church can be traced with absolute certainty to the influence of extraneous and, as we believe, non-Christian ideas.[2]

During the last ten or twelve years the New Testament teaching on the subject of the Lord's Supper has been examined and discussed with a critical minuteness and care which had never before been devoted to it. And though the critical scholars are by no means agreed among themselves as to the general conclusions that ought to be come to regarding the nature and significance of the

[1] "Omnia exeunt in mysterium"; cf. Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, p. 131.

[2] See Harnack, *History of Dogma*, ii. 146, 147; Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*, p. 292 ff.; Loofs, *op. cit.*, i. 46, 47; Anrich, *Das antike Mysterienwesen*, p. 84 ff. And cf. the frank admissions of Dr. Illingworth, *Divine Immanence*, p. 141 ff., and Mr. Inge in his chapter on "The Sacraments" in *Contentio Veritatis*, pp. 287, 294.

ordinance, and some of them have ventilated opinions which appear to be very far from justifiable, at all events their united labours have done something not only to clear the atmosphere, but to indicate the path by which alone the Church can hope to arrive eventually at a harmonious, because a historical, view upon the subject. There are certain things which criticism may be said to have determined finally, and which can no longer be ignored except by those who renounce historical criticism altogether, and decline to regard the New Testament as the true court of appeal. One point in particular must be regarded as fundamental—that all accurate thinking on the subject of the sacrament must start from the historical Supper in the upper room. It is of no use to attempt to work here by *a priori* methods, to set out with fixed dogmatic conceptions of what the Supper means, and then to refer to the New Testament for corroborations of a predetermined theory. This, however, is really the method of the Roman Catholic Church, and of High Churchmen generally. They adhere firmly to the old formula: "The Church to teach, the Bible to prove," and interpret it as meaning that we are only to approach the original documents of the Christian faith by the pathway of the later Churchly tradition.[1] Well, this claim might not be altogether unreasonable if the tradition were known to be absolutely pure and perfectly consistent, and if, further, it could be maintained that the Church Fathers had better opportunities of standing face to face with the historical Christ and His apostles than we have to-day. But in view of the fact that the scientific historical studies of modern times have brought us into a nearer touch with the realities of original Christianity than was possible to any

[1] See Gore, *Body of Christ*, pp. 241, 242. For a true view of the relation between Scripture and Churchly dogma, see Professor Orr's admirable discussion, *Progress of Dogma*, p. 14 ff.

other Christian generation since the close of the first century, in view too of the evident discrepancy between New Testament teaching and much of the teaching of the Fathers, and the no less evident diversities of opinion among the Fathers themselves, this method of appraising the sacraments seems as foolish as it would be to judge of a fountain-head among the hills not by its own clear waters which we are free to approach, but by the distant stream with which all sorts of discolouring matter have meanwhile got mingled—mud from the river banks, dye from the factories, and impurities of every description from hamlet and village and town. And if it is absurd to start from the later dogma regarding the Lord's Supper and draw inferences from that as to the original teaching of Christianity, instead of first studying that teaching as it lies plainly before us in the original documents, it is equally absurd, when we come to the New Testament itself, to start, as is so often done, not at the centre, but at the circumference; not with the narratives of the Supper, but with the sixth chapter of John.[1] If there is anything that historical criticism may be said to have determined beyond the possibility of reasonable challenge, it is this, that the only way in which we can hope to arrive at a true doctrine of the Supper is by studying the actions and words of Jesus at the historical Supper in Jerusalem, and that no dogmatic formulation can be justified which does not take this as its point of departure.[2]

There is nothing in all the life of our Lord that is better established historically than the fact that, on the night before His death, He partook with His disciples

[1] Gore, *Body of Christ*, pp. 21, 242. On the unreasonableness of taking John vi. as the point of departure, see M. Lafon, *Revue de Théologie et des Questions Religieuses*, Année IX. No. 6, p. 540 f.

[2] Cf. Schultzen, *Das Abendmahl im N.T.*, p. 1 f.; Lobstein, *La doctrine de la Sainte Cène*, pp. 11 f., 23 f.; Spitta, *Zur Geschichte u. Litteratur des Urchristentums*, p. 208 f.

of a farewell meal. On this point we have the testimony not only of the three Synoptists, but of the Apostle Paul. Indeed, we have so far the testimony also of the fourth evangelist. For while John does not tell us anything as to the special acts and words of the Lord's Supper, he testifies that on the night before He died Jesus gathered His disciples around Him, and solemnly partook with them of a parting meal. On the fact of this last meal of Jesus with His apostles every one is agreed. But as to the occasion of this meal, as to what precisely Jesus said and did at it, as to His meaning and purpose in what He said and did—on these and many other points connected with the subject all kinds of critical difficulties emerge, which will have to be carefully examined. Our first task, however, must be to clear the ground by arriving at some understanding as to the *sources* on which we are to rely, the relations between them, and their precise historical value.

I. As every reader of the New Testament is aware, we have four different narratives of the Lord's Supper. Each of the three Synoptists gives an account of the scene. John, on the other hand, does not do so; though he speaks, as has just been said, of a supper that took place on the night before the Master's death. But to compensate for John's silence, we have Paul's very important narrative in the eleventh chapter of 1 Corinthians.

Now, until the appearance of Westcott and Hort's New Testament in 1881, it was generally recognised by critical students that an examination of these four narratives reveals the existence of two distinct groups or types of text, one type being represented by Mark and Matthew, and the other by Paul and Luke. But Westcott and Hort raised a serious difficulty in the way of this principle of grouping. Having come to the conclusion that the original text of Luke at this point is that found in the Bezan Codex and several old Latin versions, they struck out from

Luke's account of the Supper not only the significant words, "This do in remembrance of Me," but the phrase "which is given for you" after the bread, and the whole verse referring to the cup after Supper.[1] If this view were generally accepted, it would, of course, throw Luke's narrative of the Supper entirely out of line with Paul's. But in spite of the deservedly high authority of Westcott and Hort in a matter such at this, recent criticism tends more and more to decide against them in this particular case, and to adhere to the reading of the Textus Receptus.[2] On grounds of pure text criticism, much can be said for their view, without doubt. But the textual arguments against it are not less weighty; and when we fall back, as we are entitled to do in such a case, upon broader considerations of a contextual and psychological nature, it seems much more likely that the variant text represented by Codex D is due to the error of a copyist than that it is the original text of the evangelist himself. If it is difficult, as Westcott and Hort insist, to see how a copyist with the longer text before him could produce the shorter form of Codex D, it is still more difficult to explain how Luke himself could have given us an account of the Lord's Supper which differs so widely from the accepted tradition

[1] *The New Testament in Greek*, ii. 63 ff. They regard the whole passage, Luke xxii. 19*b*–20, as a later interpolation taken from Paul's narrative in the eleventh of 1 Corinthians.

[2] Jülicher says, "Doch halte Ich die beiden Verse aus äusseren und inneren Gründen für echt lucanisch, und ihre Streichung für einen methodischen Fehler" (*Theologische Abhandlungen*, p. 235); while Schmiedel describes the "Western" reading as "an abnormity of no significance" (*Protestantische Monatshefte*, 1899, Heft iv. p. 125). Similarly Cremer (Hauck-Herzog, *Realencyklopädie*, i. 33), Schultzen (*Das Abendmahl im N. T.*, p. 112), Schaefer (*Das Herrenmahl nach Ursprung u. Bedeutung*, p. 148), Clemen (*Der Ursprung des heiligen Abendmahls*, p. 21 f.), Schweitzer (*Das Abendmahl im Zusammenhang mit dem Leben Jesu*, Erstes Heft, p. 46), Berning (*Einsetzung der heiligen Eucharistie*, p. 42 f.), Professor Menzies (*Expositor*, Oct. 1899, p. 243). Even Professors Sanday and Plummer, though maintaining the Westcott and Hort tradition, concede that "either reading may be original" (Sanday, Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, ii. 636), or that "the whole passage should be treated as at least doubtful" (Plummer, Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, iii. 146).

of his time, and especially from that form of the tradition which is represented by Paul, and which he must often have heard from Paul's own lips at the Lord's Table; an account of which it has to be said, either that it contains no mention of the cup at all, or that the words about the drinking of the fruit of the vine are confounded with the words about the cup of the new covenant, while the bread is made to follow the cup instead of the cup the bread.[1]

We have good grounds, therefore, for retaining the Lucan narrative as we find it in the received text. And this being the case, we shall abide by the familiar arrangement of our sources, as consisting of a Mark-Matthew group and a Paul-Luke group. But it has to be noted, in the next place, that when each of these groups is examined more particularly, it seems evident that a more original and a less original source is present in each. In other words, Matthew is found to depend upon Mark, and Luke upon Paul. The dependence of the First Gospel upon the Second is a commonplace of present-day criticism; and a comparison of their respective versions of the Supper certainly supports the prevalent opinion as to their mutual relations. As for Paul and Luke, again, the similarity between their accounts is so great that it can only be explained by regarding them as connected in a very close manner; and every one admits that Luke must have been indebted to Paul, not Paul to Luke.

But now, having settled these points—that we have two groups of narratives, a Mark-Matthew group and a Paul-Luke group, and that Mark in the one case and Paul in the other represent the older and more original accounts of the Supper—is it possible for us to go still further, and to assign a priority to one of these two older narratives

[1] The blunder of a careless copyist may be accounted for by supposing him to have made the mistake (which it is difficult to attribute to the evangelist) of thinking that the words about the fruit of the vine in verse 17 were the words of institution at the giving of the cup.

over the other? The point has been very keenly canvassed in recent years, and a great deal of significance has often been attached to a decision.[1] That Mark's account rests upon the primitive apostolic tradition, is generally admitted. But on behalf of Paul also a similar claim must certainly be made. There are some, indeed, who claim for Paul much more than this. Not only on the ground that 1 Corinthians was written before Mark's Gospel, but on the much higher ground that the apostle's narrative is due to an immediate revelation vouchsafed by the glorified Jesus, they demand for his narrative an absolute precedence over all others. Now, no one doubts that 1 Corinthians was written before Mark's Gospel; but this in itself does not imply that Paul's version rests on a more primitive tradition than that of Mark. Of course, if the second ground could be sustained, that Paul received from the ascended Lord Himself a direct revelation of what took place in the upper room, his account would be entitled to rank above every other, as the one possessed of the most immediate and the highest authority.[2] But few scholars now regard this as implied in the statement, "I received of the Lord that which also I delivered

[1] Jülicher, *e.g.*, gives the preference to Mark, and as Mark has not got the words, "This do in remembrance of Me," he finds in this circumstance a support for his theory that the Supper was simply a parable addressed to the apostles, and that Jesus had no intention that it should be repeated after His death (*Theologische Abhandlungen*, p. 237 f.). Spitta similarly attaches himself to Mark, and as in Mark the thought of Christ's death is not made so prominent as in Paul's narrative, he endeavours to make out that the Supper had no bearing whatever upon the death of Jesus, but pointed to the glorious Messianic meal in the heavenly kingdom (*Urchristentum*, pp. 266 ff., 282 ff.). Dr. Percy Gardner, on the other hand, decides very emphatically in favour of Paul, even inclining to the opinion that both Mark and Matthew derived their accounts of the Supper from the narrative of 1 Corinthians (*Origin of the Lord's Supper*, p. 12). And as he maintains that Paul's ideas regarding the sacrament were the result of a vision, which again was largely suggested by a recent visit to Eleusis, he comes to the conclusion that the whole fabric of the Christian institution rests upon nothing better than a trance or vision in which Christian ideas were curiously compounded with the rites of the heathen mystery cults!

[2] This is the view taken by Godet. See his *Luke*, vol. ii. p. 294.

unto you." The terms of the original are against such an interpretation.[1] Nor is it in accordance with the acknowledged principle of economy in the use of the miraculous, that a supernatural revelation should have been made to Paul about a particular historical incident regarding which he would quite easily and more naturally have been informed by those who were themselves present at the original Supper. Paul's narrative, therefore, it must be held, rests, like Mark's, on the primitive apostolic tradition. And when he says that he received it from the Lord, all that he means probably is that the Supper is not a rite of his own devising, nor one which he has imparted to the Corinthians on his own authority, but an ordinance which goes straight back to the positive institution of Jesus Christ Himself.[2] Frequently, however, it is suggested that while Paul undoubtedly received the tradition from the Jerusalem community, he so tinged it with his own dogmatic conceptions that it can no longer be regarded as historical in the same degree as Mark's. Against such objections we have to set the solemn words with which the apostle introduces his account of what took place on that night in which the Lord Jesus was betrayed. Even though these words do not mean that the narrative of the Supper came to him directly from the lips of the glorified Jesus, they do mean that it is from Jesus that they have come, and that Paul has received them and trans-

[1] παραλαμβάνειν is never used to denote the receiving of anything through revelation. Galat. i. 12 is no exception, as 12*b* depends upon 12*a*. Cf. Schultzen, *op. cit.*, p. 20. Further, the use of the preposition ἀπό instead of παρά points to Paul's knowledge of the Supper having come to him from Jesus Christ through a mediate channel. It is true that Lightfoot does not recognise this distinction between the two prepositions; but see, on the other hand, Moulton-Winer, *Grammar of N.T. Greek*, p. 463, and Schmiedel, *Hand-Commentar, in loco.*

[2] Dr. Percy Gardner says, "The emphatic ἐγώ in the Corinthian passage makes the claim to personal inspiration still more clear" (*op. cit.*, p. 5). But the emphasis on the ἐγώ suggests Paul's claim to authority in his exposition of the significance of the Supper, rather than to an inspired knowledge of its historical form.

mitted them with peculiar care as a sacred trust committed to his charge. The idea that the apostle was not scrupulous to hand on the tradition of the Supper just as he had received it, is one that does not do justice either to his acknowledged character or to his express affirmations in the present case. It is this that leads Harnack to say, in rejecting Spitta's ingenious constructions, "The words of 1 Corinthians xi. 23, 'I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you,' are too strong for me."[1]

Paul's narrative and Mark's, then, have equal claims to be regarded as giving us a faithful account of the apostolic tradition of the Supper. It is impossible to assign any distinct priority to either of them over the other. For deciding what was actually done and said by Jesus at the Lord's Table, we shall treat them as of like value, while we shall consider it right at every point to test the statements of the one by those of the other. As for the narratives in Matthew and Luke, though not so original as the other two, they are the testimonies of thoroughly reliable writers, who were not independent, certainly, of Mark and Paul, but who yet had their own opportunities of contact with the apostolic circle and the primitive tradition, and who doubtless carefully used those opportunities for the purpose of arriving at the truth. We cannot regard it as any absolute presumption against the historical accuracy of a phrase which we find in the First or the Third Gospel, that nothing precisely corresponding is found elsewhere. The evangelists did not do their work on the lines of an ecclesiastical committee appointed to frame a joint-minute; and it is hardly warrantable to refuse to give credit to a statement in any one of the Gospels on the mere ground that it is not found in another.

II. But now, before proceeding to examine in detail the evidence of our four authorities as to what took place at the Supper, there is an important question that ought first

[1] *History of Dogma*, i. 66.

to be dealt with, inasmuch as our decision upon it cannot but affect more or less intimately our whole interpretation of the Lord's acts and words at the Table. What was the *occasion* of the Supper? Was it at a Passover feast, or at an ordinary evening meal which stood in no relation to the Passover, that Jesus broke the bread and passed round the cup, saying, "This is My body"; "This is My covenant-blood"? Until recent years, in spite of the manifest difficulties suggested by a comparison of the statements of the Synoptists with those of the fourth evangelist, there were not many who seriously questioned the immediate connection of the Lord's Supper with the Passover. But of late a closer comparative study of the Gospel narratives has led not a few to hesitate, while some critical scholars have arrived at the decided opinion that there was no connection whatsoever, whether outward or inward, between the Supper of Jesus and the Jewish paschal meal; so that no illuminating ray falls from the ancient rite of Hebrew history upon the sacrament of the Christian Church.[1] The question is bound up with the larger question of the whole chronology of the last week of our Lord's life on earth, and with the determination especially of the day on which he died. As every careful reader of the Gospels has noticed, there seems to be a discrepancy at this last-mentioned point between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics. From all the evangelists alike we gather that Jesus was crucified on a Friday, that He lay in the tomb throughout the hours of the Jewish Sabbath, and rose again on the first day of the week. There is no controversy, therefore, as to the day of the week on which the Last Supper took place. Since Jesus died on the Friday, the Supper must have been held on the Thursday evening. But the point in dispute is whether this Thursday was the 14th Nisan, the regular day of the Jewish Passover, or the 13th Nisan, the day preceding

[1] See Grafe, *Zeitschrift für Theologie u. Kirche*, 1895, Heft ii. p. 136.

the Passover.[1] When we read the Synoptic narratives the connection of the Supper with a paschal meal appears perfectly evident. The three evangelists all tell us that on the day before the death of Jesus the disciples asked Him where they were to prepare the Passover, that Jesus directed them to a certain man in Jerusalem at whose house the feast was to be observed, and that they made ready the Passover in that house according to their Master's instructions (Mark xiv. 12–16; Matt. xxvi. 17–19; Luke xxii. 7–13). And Luke further represents Jesus as saying, after He was seated at the table, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (xxii. 15). When we turn to the Fourth Gospel, on the other hand, it seems perfectly apparent that the Last Supper, whatever its form and character, cannot have been held on the regular night of the Jewish Passover. When Judas suddenly rose from the table and went out, some of the disciples thought that he had gone to buy such things as were needed for the festival (xiii. 29). On the following morning the Jews would not enter the Roman Prætorium, "that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover" (xviii. 28). The day of the crucifixion is described as "the preparation of the Passover" (xix. 14; cf. ver. 31). And of the ensuing Sabbath it is said, "The day of that Sabbath was an high day" (xix. 31), evidently because it coincided with the day of the paschal feast, which was legally reckoned, it must be remembered, like all Jewish days, from sunset to sunset. Nor is this all, for the Synoptic narratives themselves, when carefully examined, present several features which go to corroborate John's testimony that the regular Passover of the Jews did not take place till after Jesus was crucified.[2]

[1] As the Jewish day legally began at sunset, the Passover was eaten on the 15th Nisan, according to legal reckoning; but in popular language it was spoken of as being eaten on the night of the 14th.

[2] It is worth noting that the evidence of the recently discovered *Gospel of Peter* points in the same direction. After telling how Joseph of Arimathea came

They tell us, for example, that the Sanhedrists had resolved not to attempt to put Jesus to death during the feast, lest there should be a tumult of the people (Mark xiv. 1, 2, and parallels). They not only represent Peter as carrying a sword on the night of the betrayal, but tell us that the very officers of the Sanhedrin came out against Jesus with swords and staves; whereas it was contrary to the law to bear lethal weapons on a Sabbatic day like the day of the feast. Again, they describe the Sanhedrin as assembling for the trial of Jesus on the very day of the crucifixion, and Joseph of Arimathea as purchasing grave-clothes for His burial on the same day; and yet neither of those things would have been permissible, according to the Jewish law, on the great day of the feast.[1]

Now, in view of all this, it seems evident that if we are to regard the main Synoptic statements as necessarily implying that Jesus kept the Passover on the evening of the 14th Nisan, the regular time of the Jewish paschal meal, the first three Gospels are hopelessly at variance with the Fourth, if not also at variance with themselves. In that case we should have to make choice at this point between John and the Synoptists, and between a view that the

to Pilate and begged the body of the Lord for burial, it proceeds: "And Pilate sent to Herod and asked for His body; and Herod said, Brother Pilate, even if no one asked for Him, we should have had to bury Him, for already the Sabbath draws on; for it is written in the law that the sun must not go down upon a murdered person on the day before their feast, the feast of unleavened bread." See Professor Rendel Harris's *Gospel of St. Peter*, pp. 43, 44.

[1] On these points see Chwolson, *Das Letzte Passamahl Christi u. der Tag seines Todes*, p. 6 ff., and Spitta, *Urchristentum*, p. 222 ff. Schmiedel attempts to minimise those features in the Synoptic narratives which go to support the statements of the Fourth Gospel, by showing that, however impressive in the mass, when looked at in detail they are capable of being explained away one by one (*Protestantische Monatshefte*, 1899, Heft iv. p. 142 f.). But even if it could be granted that Schmiedel was altogether successful in his process of explaining them away, it has to be remembered that those features require to be looked at in the mass as well as in detail. The striking thing is that there should be so many coincident threads of proof, even in the Synoptic narratives, which tend in the same direction as the account of the fourth evangelist.

Lord's Supper had no connection with the Passover meal, and a contrary view that it was preceded by it and sprang out of it. The tendency of many modern critics is not only to make such a definite choice, but to decide very strongly in favour of John's representation as being the more probable of the two, a decision which is rather striking in view of the general attitude assumed by some of these same critics to the historicity of the Fourth Gospel as a whole. In support of this position, Spitta and others have alleged a variety of reasons. It is pointed out, for example, that the descriptions of the Last Supper which we find in Matthew and Mark do not suggest that it was a paschal feast. The lamb is never mentioned. No parallels are drawn by Jesus between the Passover and the new Christian rite. And when He is choosing a symbol to represent His body, He takes a loaf of bread, and not a portion of the paschal lamb, as He would naturally have done if He had wished to make the Christian sacrament the antitype of the ritual supper of the Jews. The answers to such pleas, however, are very simple. It was altogether unnecessary for the apostolic tradition, when it had made clear that the Lord's Supper was preceded by a Passover meal, to give any description of the latter, inasmuch as all Passover feasts were alike, and nothing was more familiar to the members of the original Christian community than the course of procedure that would be followed on such an occasion. It was the new things that happened that night which the apostles were concerned to remember and the evangelists to write down, not what was old and perfectly well known. Again, it is entirely beside the mark to assume that if the preceding feast had been a paschal feast, Jesus would have sought to establish parallels at every point between the two rites. This is to forget that while He came not to destroy but to fulfil, He always maintained a sovereign freedom in His attitude to all traditional forms, so that His fulfilment was

also a transformation.[1] As for the suggestion that if Jesus had been keeping the Passover feast He would have identified Himself with the Passover lamb by using a portion of its flesh in the first act of the Holy Supper, and not a loaf of bread, it strikes us as revealing a singular lack both of imagination and insight. The lamb was already dead; but the sacrifice of Jesus was yet to come. The use of some still remaining portion of the roasted meat could not represent the surrender of a perfect life and its destruction by death, as those ideas were proclaimed by the breaking of a whole loaf of bread. Besides, we must remember here again the originality of Jesus, and the fact that the religion which He came to found was designed not to reproduce Jewish rites and customs, however sacred, but to fulfil their underlying ideas, while substituting for themselves what was infinitely simpler, more spiritual, and better adapted to the needs of a universal religion. Unless we deny to Jesus all insight into the nature of His own religion and all foresight of its history, it will not be difficult for us to perceive that He must have known that broken bread was infinitely better fitted than the flesh of the Jewish paschal lamb to serve to the Church of the future as the symbol of His great sacrifice of love.

There is very little weight, then, in the arguments by which some writers endeavour to set aside the evidence of the Synoptists, that on that night in which He was betrayed, and before instituting the sacramental Supper of His people, Jesus kept the Passover with His disciples.[2] Moreover, it has to be remembered that this view is beset by difficulties of the most serious nature. What are we to make of the

[1] It is of little use to seek to meet criticism of the kind referred to by discussing such questions as, which of the paschal cups it was that Jesus gave thanks for and described as His covenant-blood. Such inquiries, as Professor Bruce remarks, seem "idle, and in spirit Rabbinical." See *Expositor's Greek Testament*, i. 312.

[2] See an article by the present writer on "The Passover and the Lord's Supper" in *Journal of Theological Studies*, Jan. 1903, pp. 184–193.

unanimous testimony of the Synoptists upon the point in question? How, especially, dispose of the evidence of Mark, the oldest and most original of the three? Spitta gets rid of the whole paragraph in Mark's Gospel in which the paschal character of the Supper is affirmed (Mark xiv. 12–16), by pronouncing it an interpolation that stands in no organic connection with the rest of the narrative.[1] This, however, is a rather violent way of dealing with a passage that does not happen to square with a peculiar theory. And even if there were far more ground than has yet been shown for the assertion, that the statements which we find in the Synoptics as to the paschal character of the feast do not belong to the earliest tradition, we should still have to ask how it came to pass that so early in the history of the Church another tradition not only sprang up, but became dominant, according to which the Last Supper of Jesus with His disciples was in its initial stage a paschal supper. Spitta himself admits that in Paul's view of the sacrament the connection with the Passover meal is evident.[2] If so, how are we to explain this entire transformation of the supposed original tradition, a transformation so early that it must have taken place not only before Paul wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians, but before he became a Christian and received from the Jerusalem apostles the story of the upper room, a tradition so widely spread that not Paul only, but every one of the Synoptic evangelists, bears testimony to it? There is nothing in the external history of the Lord's Supper to account for it; for, so far from being linked to the Jewish Passover in the celebrations of the primitive Church, the Supper was immediately detached from it altogether. Instead of being observed in association with the Passover, it was observed in connection with the common meals of the Christian community. Instead of being celebrated once a year, it appears at first to have

[1] Spitta, *op. cit.*, p. 228. [2] Spitta, *ibid.*, p. 265.

been celebrated every day, and afterwards on the first day of every week. This being the case, it is exceedingly difficult to see how, within a few years of our Lord's death, and at the headquarters of primitive Christianity, a tradition could grow up which was an entire falsification of the facts as known to the apostles themselves.[1]

If it is thus impossible, on the one hand, to set aside the testimony of the Fourth Gospel, supported as that is by various touches in the Synoptic narrative, that Jesus died on the day before the regular Jewish feast, it seems equally impossible, on the other, to ignore the unanimous testimony of the Synoptists, that He kept the Passover with His disciples on the night before He died, and that it was at the close of a paschal meal that the Lord's Supper was instituted. "That it actually was," says Weizsäcker, "there is no doubt. It was on account of the Passover that Jesus went to Jerusalem that evening. It was the paschal feast which was actually held that caused His death to be compared with the slaying of the paschal lamb (1 Cor. v. 7)."[2] If, then, John is right in placing the regular Passover on the night after the crucifixion, and the Synoptists are also right when they tell us that Jesus ate the Passover with His disciples on the previous evening, the only conclusion left to us is that Jesus and His disciples kept the feast a day sooner than it was kept by the rest of the Jewish community.[3] The one serious textual difficulty in the way of this conclusion is, that in each of the Synoptic narratives there is a verse which appears to tie us down to the regular

[1] Mr. Wright's theory that the Synoptists have mixed up narratives of the Last Supper with narratives of some earlier paschal supper is purely conjectural, and has very little to recommend it. See his *N. T. Problems*, p. 178 ff.

[2] *Apostolic Age*, ii. 279.

[3] So Godet, Beyschlag, Lobstein, and many others. And this view has recently been re-affirmed, after a full and careful review of the whole ground, by Zöckler in his article "Jesus Christus" in the Hauck-Herzog *Realencyklopädie*, vol. ix. pp. 32, 42; and Sanday in the article "Jesus Christ" in *Dict. of the Bible*, vol. ii. p. 634.

night of the Jewish Passover as the occasion of the Last Supper, by telling us that it was on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread that Jesus sent His disciples to make ready the Passover (Matt. xxvi. 17; Mark xiv. 12; Luke xxii. 7). Dr. Chwolson, however, has suggested a very interesting explanation of the difficulty, which is all the more worthy of consideration as coming from a non-Christian Jew, writing in no apologetic spirit, but simply as a profound student of Jewish antiquities.[1] He endeavours to show that there are plain internal grounds for holding that at this point we have to do with a corruption, slight in itself and yet serious in its consequences, which has crept into the original text.[2] He affirms that in all our Jewish authorities, from the time of the Mosaic writings down to the Middle Ages, the expression "the first day of the feast of unleavened bread" is employed to signify not the 14th, but only the 15th Nisan. This definition of time, accordingly, on the part of the Synoptists, really conveys no intelligible meaning, since it makes Jesus order His disciples to prepare the paschal lamb a day after it had already been eaten—an inconsistency so patent that it is only to be explained on the supposition of a textual mistake. And starting from the view of an original Aramaic form for Matthew's narrative, Chwolson shows that by the very simple and natural omission of three letters of the alphabet, standing in immediate juxtaposition to another group of the same three letters, the statement, "The day of unleavened bread drew near, and the disciples drew near to Jesus," which he takes to have been the original one, would be altered into, "On the first day of unleavened bread the disciples drew near to Jesus."[3] This hypothesis, he points out, is sup-

[1] Father Matthew Power, in his *Anglo-Jewish Calendar*, p. 3, informs us that Chwolson has recently seceded from the Jewish communion.

[2] *Das Letzte Passamahl Christi*, pp. 3 ff., 10 ff.

[3] In Chwolson's belief the original source of Matt. xxvi. 17 ran thus: יומא קדמיא דפטיריא קרב וקרבו תלמידוהי לות ישוע ואמרו. Through the oversight of a copyist,

ported by the Sahidic version of Luke xxii. 7, which reads, "The day of unleavened bread was nigh, on which the Passover must be sacrificed." To complete his view, Chwolson supposes that the parallel passages in Mark and Luke must have been altered so as to bring them into harmony with Matthew, at a time when the knowledge of Jewish usages was no longer in the possession of the Church.[1]

Worthy of consideration also, in this connection, is the recent theory of Father Power, that in keeping the Passover on the Thursday evening Jesus was really keeping it on the scriptural 15th moon of Nisan (the evening of the 14th), while the Jewish authorities, in appointing it for the Friday evening, *i.e.* according to the Jewish mode of reckoning, the beginning of the Jewish Sabbath, were going a day beyond the proper scriptural date.[2] Mr. Power claims to have discovered the operation of a secret rule called "Badhu," known to the Jewish calendarists, according to which the Passover was never allowed to fall on the προσάββατον, the day preceding the Jewish Sabbath.[3] To prevent this from happening, a day was intercalated when necessary in the 8th month (Heshvan) of the preceding year; and, according to Mr. Power's general chronological scheme, this was precisely what took place in the year of our Lord's death. The Passover would naturally, and according to both scriptural and scientific

one of the two groups קרבו, which occur side by side, was dropped out, and so the meaning was transformed from, "The day of unleavened bread drew near," to "On the first day of unleavened bread" (*Das Letzte Passamahl Christi*, p. 11).

[1] Cf. Mr. W. C. Allen's statement in his article on "The Aramaic element in St. Mark," *Expository Times*, vol. xiii. p. 330. He expresses the opinion that in Mark xiv. 12, and parallels, we have a corruption that is due to translation from Aramaic into Greek.

[2] *The Anglo-Jewish Calendar for every Day in the Gospels.*

[3] The reason for this rule appears simply to have been the inconvenience of allowing the Passover and the Sabbath to fall on two consecutive days. The secrecy of the arrangement, again (for it was known only to a small official circle), was due, Father Power tells us, to the unwillingness of the Jews to admit the incorrectness of "the age-long boast of the children of Israel that the new moon is the sole ruler of their liturgical year."

law, have fallen on the Thursday evening, which was the beginning of the προσάββατον; and it was on that evening that Jesus held it. But the general Passover, of which we read in John's Gospel, was observed on the evening of Friday, according to the prescription of the authorities.

Such theories as those of Dr. Chwolson and Father Power, while not conclusive in themselves, are valuable as pointing in directions both of textual criticism and chronological study from which some final solution may yet be found of the apparent contradiction between the Synoptics and John's Gospel. But it is not necessary for us to tie ourselves to any such theories in order to explain the fact that Jesus anticipated the rest of Jerusalem in His observance of the Passover. If He knew that the Sanhedrin had decided to seize Him and put Him to death before the day of the feast, and if, as we read in Luke's Gospel, He greatly desired to eat the Passover with His disciples before He suffered, a desire which may be ascribed not only to His personal need of human fellowship and divine comfort on the eve of His passion, but to His purpose of turning the covenant rite of the Jewish Church into the covenant rite of His own community, why should He not have held the Passover a day in advance, if that was the only way in which He could hold it at all? Was the Lord of the Sabbath, it has been asked, not also Lord of the Passover?[1] If Jesus was no Sabbath-breaker, although He claimed the right as the Son of Man to treat the Sabbath law with a freedom unknown to the Rabbis, why should He not have claimed and exercised a similar liberty in regard to the Passover regulations, which, in any case, stood upon a much lower plane than the law which was written on tables of stone?[2]

[1] So Kahnis and many others.

[2] The objection is sometimes raised that in the provision made in the Old Testament law that the Passover may be observed a month later by those who have not been able to keep it at the proper time, it is prescribed that this post-

III. And now, from these discussions as to the historical worth of our four different sources and the particular occasion on which the original Supper was celebrated, let us pass to the next part of our task—the determination, as as far as may be possible, of the *acts and words* which Jesus used at the Table.

Some time during the progress of the paschal meal, but probably towards its close,[1] Jesus took a loaf and said a blessing.[2] Thereafter He broke the loaf and gave it to His disciples, and said, "Take, this is My body." In Matthew the words are, "Take, eat"; but it is a matter of little consequence for the significance of this part of the Supper whether the word "eat" was spoken or not, since there cannot be the slightest doubt that Jesus meant the bread to be eaten. This is shown by the analogy of the second part of the Supper, at which the wine was certainly drunk; by the blessing or thanksgiving which Jesus had just pronounced over the bread, which would have been perfectly meaningless if He did not intend that it should be consumed; and further, by the fact that Jesus gave the broken bread to the disciples, for this also would have been a

poned Passover also, like the regular one, shall take place on the evening of the 14th day of the month. This has been assumed by some writers to invest the number 14 with a kind of sacrosanctity for Passover purposes, and so to render it impossible that even Jesus should have held the feast on another day. But surely it is evident that the 14th day of the second month was named simply because it was the most natural day to fix upon, as corresponding with the 14th day of the first month. Instead of laying emphasis on the number 14, we should rather emphasise the fact that provision was made in the law itself for a valid observance of the Passover on an entirely different day from the proper one. If a postponed Passover was perfectly valid even for a legalist, why should Jesus, in the exercise of His sovereign freedom, not have held an anticipated one?

[1] Mark and Matthew both say, "as they were eating"; and this is borne out by Paul and Luke when they in turn place the taking of the cup "after supper," apparently in distinction from the taking of the bread.

[2] According to the usage of the N. T., there is no practical difference in meaning between the εὐλογήσας in Mark and Matthew and the εὐχαριστήσας in Paul and Luke. Both words are used of a blessing or "grace" before meat. See Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon*, under both words; and cf. Prof. Swete in *Journal of Theological Studies*, Jan. 1902, p. 163; Schaefer, *Das Herrenmahl*, p. 341 f.

meaningless act unless it was His purpose that they should partake of it. So far there is substantially no difference between the four narratives. But Paul adds to the words "This is My body" the phrase "which is for you," while Luke reproduces this phrase in the expanded form "which is given for you." Here again, however, the analogy of the second part of the Supper comes to our aid, for, according to both Mark and Matthew, Jesus spoke of His covenant-blood as "poured out for many." It seems natural, therefore, to conclude that at this stage Jesus spoke such words as we find in the versions of Paul and Luke, or, at all events, that the latter in inserting them have added nothing to the Master's thought.[1] But now comes the one really striking difference at this stage between the Mark-Matthew and the Paul-Luke types of text. Paul and Luke both make the first part of the Supper conclude with the words, "This do in remembrance of Me," while Mark and Matthew have nothing to correspond. As this, however, is a feature which meets us again in Paul's account of what Jesus said at the giving of the cup, it will be more convenient to reserve it meanwhile for separate and special consideration.

Passing now to the second action, we find Paul and Luke telling us that it was after Supper that Jesus took the cup. Matthew and Mark do not say so; but there is nothing in their narratives to contradict it. The statement suggests that there was some interval between the giving of the bread and the passing of the cup. It was like the falling of a curtain between two acts of a drama, and would make the second act all the more impressive when it came. Jesus now took a cup of wine. Mark and Matthew both say that

[1] We have assumed that we are at liberty to explain one part of the Supper by the analogy of the other, as nearly all writers on the subject are agreed in doing (cf. Cremer, Hauck-Herzog's *Realencyklopädie*, i. 35). To this Schweitzer strongly objects (*Das Abendmahl*, Heft i. p. 56 ff.), but on grounds that are quite theoretical and very inconclusive. See the note on p. 282 of the present volume.

He gave thanks, and gave the cup to His disciples. Mark adds, "and they all drank of it." Matthew puts the injunction "Drink ye all of it" into the lips of Jesus; a variation to which no doctrinal significance can possibly be attached, since the action of the disciples manifestly coincided with the Lord's intention in giving the cup; His handing it to them being virtually an invitation to drink of it. Paul and Luke do not mention the thanksgiving, the giving of the cup, or the drinking on the part of the disciples; but they both use the expression "in like manner (ὡσαύτως) also the cup after Supper," which is just a general way of indicating that the procedure in the case of the cup corresponded with that which had been followed in the distribution of the bread. Then, according to both Mark and Matthew, Jesus uttered the explanatory words, "This is My covenant-blood, which is shed for many." To this Matthew adds the phrase, "for the forgiveness of sins," an addition which has been described as a re-modelling of the thought of Jesus,[1] but which will not appear in any way foreign to the preceding words about His covenant-blood, when we bear in mind that the forgiveness of sins was to be one of the special characteristics of the new Messianic covenant, according to a well-known prophecy of Jeremiah, to which, by general admission, Jesus here alludes (Jer. xxxi. 34). In Paul and Luke, instead of "This is My covenant-blood," we have the words, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood." Here two variations may be noted. The word "new" is introduced before covenant, an addition, however, which cannot be said to import a novel idea, since the Messianic covenant was necessarily a new covenant in contrast with the old, as Jeremiah had already described it (xxxi. 31). Again, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood" is not precisely the same expression as "This is My covenant-blood." In the

[1] So, *e.g.*, Wendt, *Teaching of Jesus*, ii. 239; cf. Holtzmann, *N. T. Theologie*, i. 301, 302.

one case more emphasis is put upon the blood which secures the covenant, and in the other upon the covenant which is sealed with blood. But, practically, it would be hard to show that there is any real difference in meaning. And since it is certain, as Schultzen has remarked, that "Jesus was no pedant,"[1] it matters very little in which of the two forms His words have been more precisely reproduced. To Sacramentarian literalists, certainly, the variant form of Paul and Luke presents a serious difficulty. For if the ἐστι, or the unexpressed idea to which it corresponds in Aramaic,[2] denotes substantial identity, Jesus is represented by Paul and Luke as affirming, not the identity of the wine with His blood, but the identity of the cup with the new covenant. But except to the votaries of rigid literalism in the interpretation of the Supper, the variation cannot be said to be a matter of any serious consequence.[3] Passing on to the next point, we find that in Mark and Matthew the blood of Jesus is described as "shed for many." Luke has the variant rendering "shed for you."[4] Paul has no corresponding phrase; but against this must be set the fact that in the first part of the Supper he makes Jesus describe the broken bread as "My body for you," which covers the same idea of a death on behalf of others. As between "shed for many" and "shed for you," there can hardly be any thought of a real opposition. The one expression brings more into view Christ's love for His disciples, the

[1] *Das Abendmahl im N.T.*, p. 25. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 47: "The offering of the cup as the new covenant in the blood of Jesus is not essentially different from its offering as the covenant-blood of Jesus. In either case the covenant is thought of as instituted through the blood of Jesus, and the blood as the bearer of the covenant."

[2] Cf. p. 284 f.

[3] Some critics, indeed, have laboured hard to show that at this point in the Paul-Lucan narratives there is an evident irruption of the characteristic Pauline theology. But see p. 299 of the present volume.

[4] The grammatical construction of the verse in Luke is awkward, for the ἐκχυννόμενον has been attracted into agreement with τὸ ποτήριον, while it ought to agree with τῷ αἵματι. But this does not affect what is plainly the meaning.

other His love for the world. But if He spoke of His blood as shed for many, this would not lead the disciples to question their own personal share in the blessings of the new covenant; and if, on the other hand, He used the words "shed for you," they would not imagine for a moment that the Messianic blessings were meant for them alone.

It was at this stage, according to both Mark and Matthew, and with immediate reference to the cup of the Lord's Supper, that Jesus uttered the remarkable words, "I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine [or "this fruit of the vine"] until that day when I drink it new [Matthew adds "with you"] in the kingdom of God" (Mark xiv. 25; Matt. xxvi. 29). Luke has a corresponding saying (xxii. 18), which, however, according to the reading of the Textus Receptus, is placed not in connection with the cup of the Lord's Supper, but before the institution of the rite; so that the reference appears to be, not to the sacramental cup but to one of the cups of the preceding paschal meal. Paul, on the other hand, records no such utterance of Jesus; but as he follows up his account of the institution with the words, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. xi. 26), it is evident that he looked upon the Supper as possessed of an eschatological significance; and it is a most natural inference that it was this same saying of Jesus, preserved by the Synoptists, which led him to view it in this light. Regarding the authenticity of the saying there cannot be the least doubt; for while Luke gives it a different position in his narrative from that assigned to it by the other two Synoptic writers, it is clearly the very same utterance of our Lord which is recorded by all the three, though in a slightly variant form. The difference of position in Luke, however, is a matter of no small importance; for if his arrangement were followed, it would lead to an entirely different interpretation of the words from that which is

implied by the accounts of Mark and Matthew. In this case they would have no eschatological significance whatever, but, referring to one of the paschal cups, would simply point to the abolition of the Old Testament Passover, and its fulfilment in the new institution of Jesus Christ.[1] If, on the other hand, we adopt the order of the first two evangelists, the words have quite manifestly an eschatological bearing, and shadow forth, after a figurative manner, the fuller joy, the larger fellowship, the deeper communion with the Lord Himself which await Christ's disciples in the perfected kingdom of God.

Now, when we consider the question whether we should give the preference in this matter to Luke on the one hand, or to Mark and Matthew on the other, it seems evident that the combined testimony of the first two Synoptists is weightier than the single testimony of the third. Those who decide in favour of Luke appear to do so, in the main, for doctrinal reasons alone. If Jesus spoke the words in question over the cup of the Holy Supper, it would follow that He described the sacramental wine as "this fruit of the vine," and it would also follow that He partook personally of the cup which He called His covenant-blood; and neither of these ideas is very acceptable to Romanists and High Churchmen. But dogmatic considerations, after all, must yield to critical ones in a matter of this kind. And besides the bare fact that the single evidence of Luke is outweighed by that of the other two, we have the additional circumstance that the view presented by Mark and Matthew is corroborated by a good deal of additional evidence which goes to show that Jesus at the Supper gave a distinct eschatological turn to the thoughts of His disciples. Not only have we Paul's words "till He come," but even in Luke's own narrative we find Jesus saying to the disciples after the Supper was

[1] So, *e.g.*, the Roman Catholic Berning, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

over, but before they rose from the Table, "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as My Father appointed unto Me, that ye may eat and drink at My Table in My kingdom" (xxii. 29, 30). And again, in the account which we have in the Fourth Gospel of our Lord's discourse after the Last Supper, we find such plain eschatological references as the sayings about the house of many mansions, and the place prepared for His people, and His coming again to receive them unto Himself (xiv. 2, 3).[1] Thus, on every ground, we seem to be justified in concluding that the saying was spoken at the place where it is recorded by the first two evangelists, and was spoken with reference to the Christian Supper, and with the view of denoting its eschatological outlook.

And now, finally, we have Paul standing alone in recording at the close of the second act of the Supper the words, "This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me." It must be born in mind, however, that in Luke's narrative a corresponding injunction is found in connection with the giving of the bread; and since it can hardly be doubted that the two parts of the Supper are inseparably bound together, repetition and remembrance must belong to the second act as much as to the first. This indeed may have been covered in Luke's intention, when he indicated generally that what Jesus had said and done in the case of the bread, He said and did "in like manner" (ὡσαύτως) in the case of the cup.

We have now traversed the four separate accounts of the Supper, and compared them at point after point. And there can be no doubt that the first impression produced by such a detailed comparison is that there are far more differences between them than casual readers of the New Testament are apt to imagine,—differences, too, of a kind which make it quite impossible to hope to arrive

[1] Cf. Spitta, *op. cit.*, p. 277 ff.

with any certainty at the *ipsissima verba* which were used by our Lord at the original Supper in the upper room.[1] It seems clear from these differences, which we find lying side by side in our earliest documents, that while the apostles treasured up in their hearts what they had heard from Jesus at the Supper Table, they cannot have concerned themselves about an exact verbal literalness and uniformity when they repeated the Lord's sayings in the primitive community or rehearsed them at subsequent celebrations of the Supper. On the one hand, it was hardly in the nature of things that each of those who were present should remember the Lord's words in precisely the same way. And, on the other hand, anything like an ecclesiastically fixed liturgical formula was far from the thoughts of the Church, much more any idea of a formula which would operate with a kind of talismanic power when properly pronounced. But if variation in small details is the first thing that strikes us in these four narratives, the next is a fundamental and substantial similarity, excepting only in regard to the injunction, "This do in remembrance of Me." Eichhorn, in the midst of some rather wild and loose criticism of the narratives of the Supper, has one very just remark. He says that no one who reads the four accounts of the Supper, one after the other, can possibly doubt that all the four narrators are speaking of the very same thing in the very same sense.[2] And while the first impression produced by a

[1] Cf. Cremer, Hauck-Herzog's *Realencyklopädie*, i. 35; Schmiedel, *Hand-Commentar: 1 Kor.*, p. 163. Schweitzer, indeed, would make Mark's narrative the absolutely authentic one; but his reasons for so doing must be pronounced purely hypothetical, in spite of his claim to have established "a principle of authenticity which rests no longer on opinions but on laws" (*op. cit.*, p. 56 ff.). Berning, again, writing from the professed standpoint of historical criticism, but with an evident eye to the interests of the Roman formula, attempts to arrive at the precise words of Jesus by a process of selection and combination. But no such process, however ingenious, can claim the least certainty for its results.

[2] *Das Abendmahl im N.T.*, p. 8.

minute comparison is a sense of differences unnoticed before, the second and deeper impression is that those differences, with the one exception referred to, do not affect the essential unity of representation that is found in all our four reporters, with regard not only to the symbolic actions, but to the explanatory sayings by which those actions were accompanied.

But what is to be said of this real difficulty that still remains—the apparent discrepancy between the Paul-Luke text and the Mark-Matthew text in regard to a direct command for the repetition of the feast? In the former group the command is present, in Luke at the end of the first act of the Supper, in Paul at the end of both acts;[1] but in the second group it is entirely wanting. Must we conclude that Jesus never spoke the words "This do in remembrance of Me," and never intended the symbolic actions of the Supper to be repeated by His disciples? This is the conclusion that has been arrived at recently by certain critical scholars. They tell us that the purpose of Jesus at the Supper was to bid His disciples a solemn farewell, or to point them forwards to the hope of a future reunion in the heavenly kingdom; but that He had no thought of instituting a rite for observance by the Church, and certainly spoke no such words as are recorded by Paul and Luke. It was their own sense of need and desire, we are told, which first led the disciples to repeat the meal; and after they had begun to do so, the belief somehow sprang up that the Lord had personally enjoined this rite, and had appointed it to be observed as a memorial

[1] In the second case Paul gives the longer form, "This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me." The "it" has nothing to correspond in the original, but the following verse, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink the cup ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come," shows quite plainly that the reference is not to *any* cup, but to the special cup of the Supper. The idea of some modern critics, which Mrs. Humphrey Ward has worked into her account of the "New Brotherhood of Christ" in her story of *Robert Elsmere*, that "as often as ye drink" means "every time ye drink at any meal," is thoroughly fantastic.

of Himself.[1] But though such theories are very popular at present in certain quarters, they are really built upon very questionable premises. For they rest upon two somewhat large assumptions, the assumption that because Mark and Matthew do not report certain words, no such words can have been spoken by Jesus; and the further assumption that, though Paul and Luke do expressly report them, this does no more than prove that a sincere but mistaken belief to that effect existed in the mind of the primitive Church. Both of these must be pronounced to be assumptions not only large, but altogether unwarrantable. Besides, as nearly all this class of critics admits that from the earliest days the Supper was repeated in the Church, that long before the time of Paul, indeed practically from the beginning, it was everywhere believed to rest upon a positive injunction of Jesus Christ, and that this common Christian belief must have been fully shared even by Mark and Matthew themselves, notwithstanding their failure to incorporate the express injunction in their account of the Lord's words,[2] it is difficult to see how the fact that the first two evangelists have not reported these particular words can be held as clear testimony on their part that no such words were actually spoken by Jesus. The only ground alleged is, that their silence shows that they did not find the words in the sources on which they depended. But as it is admitted that their sources came, precisely as Paul's did, from the original apostolic circle in Jerusalem,[3]

[1] See especially Jülicher in the *Theologische Abhandlungen*, pp. 235 ff., 245 ff.; and Spitta, *Urchristentum*, p. 301 ff.

[2] See Jülicher, *ut sup.*

[3] Jülicher says (*ibid.*, 236), "Ihre Quellen gehen aus den gleichen Kreisen hervor wie die des Paulus." The dependence of Mark upon Peter is widely admitted, while in the case of Paul we have his own testimony (1) to the fact that three years after his conversion he went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days (Gal. i. 18); (2) to the fact that at a subsequent period he again went up to Jerusalem for the express purpose of conferring earnestly with Peter, James, and John concerning the truths of the gospel, "lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain" (Gal. ii. 2; cf. ver. 9).

it is not easy to understand how, within the original apostolic circle itself, there can have been two contrary traditions, in one of which the Supper was represented as nothing but a farewell meal, and in the other as a positive institution for the future. If the primitive tradition had really included two separate strands of testimony, representing two opposite ideas of the original Supper, there would surely have been left in Early Church history some traces of doubt and controversy as to whether or not Jesus had positively instituted a memorial rite for the community. But there is absolutely no trace of any such thing; a circumstance which it would be very difficult to explain if the tradition which was recognised by Mark and Matthew to be the oldest and most authentic knew nothing of any utterance of Jesus upon this point. In the following century, as Schaefer has reminded us, a bitter strife arose as to the proper day of the week for the observance of Easter; but there never appears to have been any dispute as to the infinitely more important question, whether or not Jesus had instructed His disciples to keep the Supper in remembrance of Himself.[1]

Professor Menzies of St. Andrews has made a very interesting contribution to the discussion on the two versions of the Lord's Supper represented by Mark and Paul respectively, in which, while agreeing generally with those critics who deny the institutional character of our Lord's acts and words, he takes a different view of the personal relation of Mark and Matthew to the predominating tradition of the early Church.[2] Apparently he feels the inconsistency of setting these two evangelists before us as fully sharing the general belief of the Church that Jesus had instructed the apostles to repeat the Supper, and at the same time interpreting their silence upon this point

[1] *Das Herrenmahl*, p. 216.

[2] "The Lord's Supper: St. Mark or St. Paul?" *Expositor*, Oct. 1899.

as a tacit condemnation of their own convictions. After stating that "the disciples came very early to misunderstand their Master, and to represent Him as ordering the repetition of these acts when He had not done so," he adds, "Mark and Matthew, at least, did not misunderstand Him."[1] By the disciples who misunderstood Jesus he means, as he subsequently indicates, the Jerusalem apostles themselves.[2] But since, on his own view of the origin of the Gospels,[3] neither of the first two evangelists was present at the original Supper, and both of them composed their Gospels long after the time when Paul wrote the First Epistle to the Corinthians, how are we to account for the peculiar fact that they not only knew better than the Jerusalem apostles what actually took place in the upper room, but understood the Master where His own immediate disciples had failed to understand Him? Surely such a theory is beset by larger difficulties than the difficulty of explaining why Mark and Matthew did not record the words, "This do in remembrance of Me." What right, after all, have we to assume that in this particular case, or in any other case, Mark and Matthew have reported every word, or even every important word, that Jesus uttered? It is worthy of notice that even the critics who deny the authenticity of the saying, "This do in remembrance of Me," usually assume that the other saying of Jesus about drinking the new wine in the kingdom of God is quite unchallengeably historical, although it is not recorded by Paul.[4] Why then should they make the fact that the words "This do in remembrance of Me" are not found in the first two evangelists, an incontrovertible reason for rejecting them? What right have we to take for granted that a saying which is vouched for by both Paul and Luke cannot be historical, inasmuch as it is not

[1] "The Lord's Supper: St. Mark or St. Paul?" *Expositor*, Oct. 1899, p. 254.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 259. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 245. [4] See Spitta, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

found in the other two narratives of the Supper? Instead of supposing either that Mark and Matthew understood Jesus differently from the Jerusalem apostles and the rest of the Early Church, or that they agreed with every one else in misunderstanding Him, is it not more natural to suppose that they understood Him in the very same sense as the apostles, and also that they, together with the apostles, understood Him aright; and that if they have not set down this particular utterance, it is because they did not consider it necessary to report an injunction about which no Christian of their times ever entertained the slightest doubt, and the reality of which was sufficiently attested in a practical manner by the regular celebration of the Supper, with each returning Lord's Day, in every Church throughout the Christian world? [1]

And if it be asked why Paul, then, was so particular to remind the Corinthians of a saying of the Lord which is not reported by Mark and Matthew, the answer is very plain. It was not because he felt the need of impressing upon his converts that Jesus had ordained the memorial feast; to them, as well as to him, this was a matter of course. But he was deeply concerned, as the whole chapter shows, about the fact that in Corinth it had not been sufficiently realised that this feast was not only repeated by the Lord's command, but was nothing else

[1] Weizsäcker suggests that Mark's form is more liturgical and Paul's more historical (*Apostolic Age*, ii. 281). Schultzen objects to this distinction (*Das Abendmahl im N.T.*, p. 47); and it is no doubt misleading, if it is taken to imply that anything like fixed liturgical forms were used in the Church at the time of the composition of Mark's Gospel. But it may be so far correct to say that Mark, in his brief and abrupt narrative of what took place in the upper room, only felt it necessary to give the sayings, "This is My body," "This is My covenant-blood," which formed the essential moments of the symbolic content of the Supper, leaving out the command to repetition because it did not form an essential part of the observance, and because it might be regarded as embodied and expressed in the regular practice of the Church; while Paul, on the other hand, dwells upon this command, as is observed in the next paragraph, for special hortatory reasons.

than a living monument of Christ's great sacrifice of redeeming love, with the result that, in consequence of their failure to realise this thoroughly, the Christians of Corinth had been giving way, at the common meals with which the institutional Supper was associated, to such selfishness and greed and excess as ought to have been far removed from the minds of those who were about to gather round the Holy Table. Even the fact that Luke records the saying only after the giving of the bread, while Paul records it both after the bread and after the cup, instead of casting any additional doubt upon the historical truth of the words, affords rather a fresh proof that in the view of the whole Christian community the repetition of the Supper rested upon a direct command of Jesus. It is impossible to imagine that Luke thought that the eating of the bread was to be repeated, but not the drinking of the wine. Clearly the two acts of the Supper go together: if Jesus directed the first to be repeated, He must have made it plain that the second was to be repeated along with it. The true conclusion to be drawn, therefore, from Luke's omission of the command in connection with the second part of the Supper is, that it was unnecessary, from the historical point of view, to repeat a saying which could perfectly well be taken for granted, in consideration of the fact that the memorial meal in both of its parts was regularly observed in every Christian Church without exception, and observed certainly on the footing that the Lord Himself had enjoined that this should be done.

The absence of the command, accordingly, in Mark and Matthew, does not contradict the institutional character of the Supper; and its presence in Paul and Luke cannot be regarded as a sign of a less primary tradition than that which is represented by the other two. On the contrary, the weight of evidence is strongly in favour of the historical character of the much-debated words. On this point the

preponderance of reasonable critical opinion entirely supports the traditional belief that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was instituted by a direct injunction of Jesus Christ. Harnack, for example, in spite of certain peculiar views as to the meaning of the Supper, maintains that Jesus Himself ordained it as a memorial of His death.[1] And Weizsäcker affirms in the most unqualified fashion that the whole evidence of the New Testament proves that the ritual meal of the early Church was based upon a command given by the Lord Himself at His Last Supper, and that "every assumption of its having originated in the Church from the recollection of intercourse with Him at table, and the necessity felt for recalling His death, is precluded."[2]

In the present lecture we have sought to determine the sources on which we are to depend for our knowledge of the historical Supper of Jesus, the occasion on which that Supper took place, and, so far as possible, the significant acts and words of the Lord. In the next lecture we shall consider the not less important and still more difficult question of the meaning of those significant acts and words, when they are regarded from the historical standpoint, and interpreted in view of the Old Testament background against which, in the intention of Jesus, they are clearly to be set.

[1] *Brod und Wasser*, in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, Band vii., Heft 2, p. 139.

[2] *Apostolic Age*, ii. 279. It is unnecessary to multiply testimonies; but it may be said that the leading representatives of British scholarship give an almost unanimous verdict in the same direction; while among critical scholars on the Continent, besides the two mentioned above, the names of Lobstein, Zahn, Wendt, and Kaftan may be referred to. Kaftan, after insisting that Jesus evidently intended a repetition of the Supper, goes on to observe that over-against the absence of the words "This do," etc., in Mark and Matthew, we have to set the fact that from the very first the disciples broke bread and kept the Lord's Supper. The attempts to explain this fact apart from an ordinance of Jesus, he says, are all forced, and would have a claim to be heard only if it were already made out that no such words were spoken by the Lord. But the case stands rather thus, that the unanimous praxis of the oldest community tells very strongly in favour of the tradition in Paul and Luke, and that general considerations, such as that the words, if original, could not have been lacking in the narratives of Mark and Matthew, cannot prevail as against the weight of this fact. See his *Dogmatik*, p. 610.

LECTURE VII.

The Supper of Jesus: Its Significance.

In the preceding lecture we endeavoured to determine, as nearly as possible, from a comparative study of our four narratives, what were the acts and sayings of Jesus at the institution of the Supper. We now pass to a consideration of the significance of those momentous acts and words. If our task hitherto has been difficult, it now becomes more difficult than ever, inasmuch as the problems set before us by the facts and theories of criticism do not present so great stumbling-blocks to a right understanding of the sacrament, as the obstacles raised by theological speculations and ecclesiastical prepossessions. These obstacles, however, we must seek, as far as may be, to avoid, by going directly to the statements of our New Testament authorities, and interpreting them in what appears to be their historical sense.

1. But before proceeding to examine and weigh the acts and words of Jesus at the Supper with a view to the determination of their meaning, we must set down some preliminary considerations which will have to be kept in view throughout our investigation. In the first place, we must remember that since the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as we know it, rests upon the original Supper in the upper room, and finds in it its prototype and authority, there can be no essential distinction between the two as regards their significance and efficacy. Some critics may think that they can discover a difference between the Synoptic view

of the sacrament and the Pauline view; and those again who find in the sixth chapter of John a special Johannine conception may distinguish this from both of the other two. But all historical scholars are at least agreed that the various New Testament writers had no other purpose than to explain the Lord's original intention when He broke the bread and passed round the cup, as He sat with His disciples in Jerusalem on the night before He died.[1] On all grounds of history we must hold it to be fundamental for the discovery of the doctrine of the sacrament, that the original Lord's Supper in the upper room was normative and typical for every subsequent celebration.[2] Eichhorn tells us that, whilst he was a student at Leipzig, he heard Professor Harless, in a class lecture, propound the view that the original Lord's Supper was not a real Lord's Supper, *i.e.* that the disciples did not receive in it the body and blood of Christ. Shortly after, at a meeting of a theological *Verein* at which Harless himself was present, a student read a paper in which he vigorously maintained the thesis that if the disciples did not receive the body and blood of Christ at the historical Supper, when the Lord Himself presided at the Table, distributing the elements with His own hands and speaking the words of institution with His own lips, it is impossible to think of any reception of the sacred body and blood in later celebrations, when the words of the Lord are only recited by another. And Harless was so much impressed by the argument, that when next he dealt with the subject in his class, he abandoned his former position and argued that the first Lord's Supper must have been a true Lord's Supper in the full sense of the Lutheran Church.[3] The student, no

[1] Cf. Schultzen, *Das Abendmahl im N. T.*, p. 1; Lobstein, *La doctrine de la Sainte Cène*, p. 12; Meyer, *Matthew*, ii. 206.

[2] "The first Lord's Supper dispensed by Jesus must have carried with it the whole specific essence of the sacred ordinance" (Meyer, *Corinthians*, i. 297).

[3] *Das Abendmahl im N. T.*, p. 5 ff.

doubt, was absolutely right in asserting that, as regards participation in the blessing of the sacrament, whatever the nature of that blessing may be, no essential distinction can be allowed between the first Lord's Supper and those that have followed. But while Harless's action says much for his open-mindedness and honesty, and for the free and frank relations between a German professor and his class, there can be little question, as we shall see immediately, that he chose the wrong horn of the dilemma into which this logical student had pressed him.

2. For if it is true that the Church can justify her doctrine of the Supper only by an essential identification of the Sacrament which she now observes with the Supper in the upper room, it is no less true that that historical Supper of Jesus must be dealt with in a historical way; *i.e.* we must not carry back to it all our own dogmatic prepossessions on the subject, but must seek to realise it as it actually took place, and set the actions and words of the Saviour against their proper background of outward circumstance. But as soon as we do so the extreme difficulty, if not absolute impossibility, of all literal and materialising conceptions as to participation in Christ's body and blood becomes apparent; and under literal and materialising conceptions must be included alike transubstantiation, consubstantiation, and those hybrid theories in which the Roman and Lutheran doctrines are subtly, though often, it would seem, unconsciously compounded.[1] Harless, as we saw, endeavoured to escape from the antinomy he had created by carrying back the whole

[1] In his celebrated "Charge" the late Archbishop of Canterbury declared that the Anglican theory of the Real Presence "is hard to distinguish from the Lutheran doctrine,"—a statement, Canon Hensley Henson informs us, which "Catholics" (*i.e.* Anglo-Catholics) have received "in disgust of the suggestion that they stand in the matter of Eucharistic doctrine with the protagonist of Protestantism" (*Cross-Bench Views of Church Questions*, p. 94). A good illustration of this disgust is afforded by the language of Mr. G. W. E. Russell in his *Household of Faith*, p. 400.

Lutheran doctrine of the Eucharist into the original Supper of Jesus, and maintaining that on that first occasion the disciples literally ate of the Lord's body and drank of His blood. But how, we naturally ask, could Jesus give His disciples His body to eat and His blood to drink, in any sense that was objectively real, while He was sitting there before them in His familiar earthly form? High Churchmen, both Lutheran and Anglican, have endeavoured to meet this difficulty by the assumption of an extraordinary miracle, a miracle of which our narratives give us not the faintest hint of any kind. They have assumed that at the institution of the Supper Jesus either had his own glorified body at His disposal, so that He could dispense it beforehand to His disciples, or that He Himself in that hour underwent a temporary process of transfiguration and glorification. Bishop Gore, for instance, says in his *Body of Christ:* "The whole argument of this book assumes that the Eucharist is a communion in the spiritual body of the risen and living Christ; and therefore that it could only be rightly celebrated in the power of the Spirit which was not given before Christ was glorified. How, then, could it be instituted before the Passion? How could Christ, while yet in His mortal body, give His disciples His flesh and blood to eat and drink? To this question there is, I think, no answer, except by regarding the institution of the Eucharist as an anticipation of glory akin to the Transfiguration."[1] Dr. Gore's whole doctrine of the Eucharist thus rests upon what he admits to be an assumption, an assumption, be it noticed, for which not a word of justification can be quoted from our historical narratives. On

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 312. On the untenableness of this idea, see Meyer, *Corinthians*, i. p. 297 ff., and Rudolf Schaefer, *Das Herrenmahl*, pp. 350, 380 f. Schaefer, however, while perceiving clearly enough the absolute groundlessness of the transfiguration theory, endeavours to save his realistic conceptions by maintaining that at the original Supper the disciples partook of the real body and the real blood of the earthly Jesus!

behalf of this assumed miracle he pleads the analogy of the transfiguration. But miracles rest upon evidence, not upon the analogy of other miracles; and he has no more right to assume hypothetically a repetition of the transfiguration, than to assume, let us say, that Jesus twice rose from the dead. Moreover, the miracle which he postulates infinitely transcends the miracle of the transfiguration. For it implies not merely a glorification of the body of Jesus, but a glorification of His blood;[1] an idea which is altogether unscriptural,[2] if not altogether meaningless as well. And further still, this glorified body and blood are supposed to have been eaten and drunk by the disciples (the Lord Himself sitting before them all the while),—a feature of the assumed miracle which carries it infinitely beyond anything of which we read as taking place on the mount of transfiguration.

And here we may remark that it is not only Lutherans and Anglicans who vitiate their theories of the sacrament by connecting them with unwarrantable notions as to some miraculous transformation in the body of Jesus during the course of the Supper. Even Calvin, as is well known, in his attempt to mediate between the Lutherans and Zwinglians, was tempted to make use of the idea that certain forces proceed from Christ's glorified body and are communicated to the believer in the Supper; so bringing us face to face once more with the alternative—either the sacrament of the Church is something essentially different from the original Supper, or the body of Jesus, as He sat at the Table in the upper room, must have experienced

[1] See *Body of Christ*, p. 130.

[2] See 1 Corinthians xv. 50. If it be said that the flesh and blood which cannot inherit the kingdom of God are our own flesh and blood only (so Schaefer, *op. cit.*, p. 348), and that we have no right to draw any inference from these words as to the physical nature of the glorified Christ Himself, it may be pointed out that in the preceding verse we read that we are to "bear the image of the heavenly," *i.e.* the Heavenly One, Christ Himself. On the absurdity of the idea of Christ's glorified blood, see Schultzen, *Das Abendmahl im N. T.*, p. 48.

some magical transformation of which our historical narratives have nothing to tell us.

From all such dreams and speculations we can only be delivered by adhering firmly to our historical statements, and refusing to allow dogmatic considerations of one kind or another to tempt us to assume this, that, or the other miraculous event, for which our sources afford no warrant whatsoever.

3. It is of great importance, in seeking to arrive at the significance of what Jesus did and said at the Supper, that we should observe the true relation between His actions and His words. In discussions upon the subject the words of institution are commonly set in the very foreground, and made to dominate the whole situation, as if Jesus had first declared the bread and the wine to be His body and blood, and then distributed them *as such* to His disciples. And so, when any suggestion is made as to the non-literal sense being the natural and proper, because the historical, sense of our Lord's language, it is protested that such an interpretation is entirely precluded by the express words of institution. This was Luther's great weapon in the famous Marburg Conference. When Zwingli pressed him hard with weighty considerations of a historical and exegetical kind, he turned to the words *Hoc est corpus Meum*, which he had written in chalk on the table before him, as if they made an end of all controversy. But a careful examination and comparison of the narratives brings out the fact that Jesus did not first proclaim the bread and the wine to be His body and blood, and then distribute them as such to the disciples; but first gave the elements to the disciples, and then, while they were partaking of them, spoke the explanatory words.[1] Indeed, the narrative of Mark suggests, in the case of the cup, that all had drunk of it before Jesus spoke at all. "And he took a cup," we

[1] Cf. Hooker, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, v. 67, § 6.

read, "and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them: and they all drank (ἔπιον) of it. And He said unto them, This is my covenant-blood which is shed for many" (xiv. 23, 24).[1]

Now, this confirms the view that the procedure at the Supper was essentially spiritual and symbolic, for it brings what Jesus did and said into line, so far, with other symbolic actions of which we read in the lives of the prophets and in the history of Christ Himself. The Old Testament, as we know, records many instances of dramatic actions performed by the prophets, which were followed or accompanied by explanatory words. The cases of Ahijah rending his new garment into twelve pieces, and giving ten of them to Jeroboam (1 Kings xi. 29–31), of Elisha bidding the young king shoot the arrow of deliverance through the eastern window (2 Kings xiii. 14–17), of Jeremiah breaking the potter's vessel in the Valley of Hinnom (Jer. xix. 10, 11), will at once suggest themselves. In the New Testament, again, we have Agabus binding Paul with his own girdle, and then predicting that even thus he should be bound at Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 10, 11). And to come to our Lord Himself, we have that incident after the resurrection, when, having first breathed upon His disciples, He said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John xx. 22); and above all, that striking deed of gracious humbleness, the washing of the disciples' feet, followed by the interpretation of the meaning and purpose of the act (John xiii. 3–17). So it was here. There were symbolic actions; and, accompanying them or following them, there were explanatory words by which the symbolic actions were made clear.

Whatever further meaning, then, the Lord's Supper may have had, it was, in the first place, essentially a thing of symbols. It was a parable, as Weizsäcker has rightly

[1] *See* Schweitzer, *Das Abendmahl*, i. p. 49 f.

said;[1] "the last parable that we possess from the mouth of Jesus," as Jülicher calls it. And the last-named writer has done good service at this point to the students of the Supper, by reminding us of our Lord's frequent habit of speaking twin-parables, or pairs of parables, in which the second member of the pair repeats the truth that has been already illustrated in the first, while setting it in fresh lights and adding new suggestions.[2] Thus we have such doublets as the tares and the drag-net, the mustard-seed and the leaven, the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price, the lost sheep and the lost coin. And similarly in the Supper we have a double parable, the parable of the bread and the parable of the wine; though here again, as in other cases, the two are not exactly the same, but the first is shorter and simpler, and the second fuller and richer. And yet there is such an essential similarity between the two as to justify us in bringing them into the closest relation, and employing the one as an aid to the interpretation of the other.[3]

4. Another consideration which should be borne in mind from the outset, is the fact that the thought of the Passover underlay and coloured the whole of the proceedings at the original Supper. The grounds for maintaining that a paschal meal was the occasion of the original institution have already been set forth. And now we must remember that this circumstance of their paschal setting is of no little significance for the correct interpretation of the

[1] *Apostolic Age*, ii. 281.

[2] *Theologische Abhandlungen*, p. 243.

[3] Schweitzer, who holds that Mark's narrative is the absolutely authentic one of the four, argues that its distinctive peculiarity, and one of the marks of its authenticity, is the wide difference that it brings out between the two parts of the Supper. But in denying the parallelism between the two acts he stands practically alone, as he himself admits. And it is worth noting that while he forbids us to explain the first part of the Supper by the help of the second, this is precisely what he does himself, without the least hesitation, in dealing with a matter on which he lays great stress, the temporal relation, namely, between the actions and the words of Jesus. *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

actions and words of Jesus at the Table. It has a bearing, for example, on the question whether or not the Supper refers to the Lord's death, and whether or not that death was a sacrifice. An ordinary meal of bread and wine might not suggest such ideas; but a paschal meal clearly suggested them. If Jesus rose towards the end of a solemn repast, at which He and His disciples had been partaking together of the lamb of the Jewish Passover, and, taking a loaf in His hands, broke it and gave it to His disciples to eat, and then said of it, "This is My body for you," the analogy between the slain lamb and the broken bread is apparent. Again, the connection of the Supper with the Passover has a bearing upon the question whether the former was meant to be repeated. In the case of the Passover, every Jew was familiar with the words, "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations" (Exod. xii. 14). And if the Lord's Supper sprang out of a Passover meal, and was deliberately set by Jesus in this relation of filiation to it, that goes to confirm what was evidently the belief of the Church from the earliest days, that Jesus both intended and commanded the repetition of the feast as a memorial of Himself. And once more, if the Supper took place at the close of a paschal meal, and was designed by Jesus to serve a purpose in His community similar to that which the Passover had fulfilled in the history of the Jews, it naturally claims an inheritance in the associations and ideas of sacrificial meals generally, and of the great Jewish covenant-meal of redemption in particular. Its conjunction with the older rite shows that it was meant to be an act of thanksgiving and worshipful communion with God, and at the same time an act of social fellowship and brotherly love by which Christ's disciples bound themselves to one another.

Approaching the Supper, then, in the light of the fore-

going considerations, let us try to form a conception of its meaning which shall be consistent with historical realities, and at the same time not untrue to the grandeur and depth of the spiritual facts.[1]

I. At a certain stage in the paschal feast, probably towards the close, Jesus took a loaf, *i.e.* a flat round cake of bread, and after offering a blessing or thanksgiving to God, broke it and gave it to His disciples with the words, "Take, this is My body." Now, while, as we have seen, in point of time, the symbolic action came before the explanatory words, it is necessary for us, looking back upon the scene and trying to arrive at its whole meaning, to read the action in the light of our Lord's commentary upon it. It is true that we shall not fully understand the meaning of the words "This is My body" until we have understood the purpose of the bread-breaking; but it is no less true that we cannot even begin to understand why Jesus broke the bread until we have considered in what sense He afterwards described this broken bread as His own body. And here we come straightway to the crucial point of the long controversy. What did Jesus mean when He said "This is My body"? For many a day the copula was fastened upon, and the question was keenly discussed whether the ἐστι denotes identity of substance or merely points to a representation of the body by the bread.

[1] Weizsäcker, while describing the Supper as a parable, thinks that it is also a "problem" which Jesus has set us (*Apostolic Age*, ii. 281). Against this idea Jülicher has justly protested, maintaining that in the Supper we have a parable the simplicity of which is demanded by the very solemnity of the original circumstances, so that the least far-fetched explanation of Christ's words is self-evidently the truest (*Theologische Abhandlungen*, p. 240). Jülicher, however, carries the simplifying process rather far; and Haupt is warranted in replying that the Master could not be precluded by any lack of understanding on the part of His disciples from expressing in that solemn hour the deepest thoughts of His heart (*Ueber die ursprüngliche Form und Bedeutung der Abendmahlsworte*, p. 24). But Jülicher is so far right that in its main outlines the Supper was intended by Jesus to be not a problem, but a rite the general purport of which was perfectly intelligible to the men who sat around Him that night at the Table.

Œcolampadius pointed out, as many have done since, that if Jesus spoke in Aramaic (and it is now practically certain that He did),[1] He would not use any copula at all, but would simply say, "This—My body." This is a consideration which certainly exhibits in a rather foolish light the philological labours that are still expended in some quarters on the effort to prove that the word ἐστι denotes substantial identity and nothing else.[2] And yet, on the other hand, it must be admitted that even though no word corresponding to ἐστι was ever spoken by Jesus, we are still left face to face with the question of the idea of the unexpressed copula, and have still to ask what our Lord meant when He said of the broken bread which He had just given to His disciples, "This—My body."[3]

That Jesus meant that the bread which He had handed to His disciples was literally His *earthly* body is, of course, inconceivable and impossible; while the idea that for the time being His body was miraculously transmuted into a glorified form, in order to its being partaken of, is not only, as we have seen, a tremendous assumption of which the narratives give us no suggestion, and for which otherwise there is not a particle of evidence, but a hypothesis which creates more difficulties than it aims at removing. It seems practically certain, for instance, that Jesus partook of the Supper in person. This not only follows from the whole idea of the Supper as an act of communion at the Table between the disciples and their Master, but is expressly implied in the saying, "I will not drink henceforth of this

[1] See Arnold Meyer's *Jesu Muttersprache;* the introduction to Dalman's *Worte Jesu;* and Zahn's *Einleitung*, i. pp. 1–24.

[2] Bishop Gore, it is worth noting, while maintaining the identification of Christ's body and blood with the elements, frankly admits that this cannot be derived from the copula: "It is, I venture to think, useless to argue with too great exactness about the word *is*. It describes very various kinds of identification. . . . The copula is clearly indeterminate" (*Body of Christ*, p. 246).

[3] Cf. Wendt, *Teaching of Jesus*, ii. 321; Plummer, *Dictionary of the Bible*, iii. 149.

fruit of the vine," with which the second part of the Supper concluded. But if the assumption of a glorified body on the part of Jesus suits, as some think, the theory that His body and blood were literally partaken of, it only serves to increase the psychological and moral difficulties that are raised by the fact that Jesus Himself partook of the elements. Besides, this hypothesis altogether fails to explain the relations of the disciples to Jesus at the Table and afterwards, as well as their subsequent attitude to what took place in the upper room. That they had no idea at the time that they were literally partaking of their Master's body and blood, may be taken as self-evident. If they had conceived of such an amazing fact, some expression of their astonishment would surely have been given at the Table. But there is no trace of any such thing. And if afterwards they had come to believe that, without knowing it at the moment, they actually ate that night of their Master's body and drank of His blood, how strange it is again that no sign is given in the Gospels of some such subsequent transformation in their thoughts. In other cases where mysterious words of Jesus, misunderstood at the moment, were afterwards discerned in their true meaning, our attention is commonly drawn to the fact (cf. Mark ix. 32; Luke ii. 50, xviii. 34; John viii. 27, x. 6, xii. 16). But in the present case not a word is said by the historians of the Supper by way of explaining to us that the men who on that night ate the bread and drank the wine which Jesus put into their hands, afterwards came to understand that they had been eating the Lord's glorified body and drinking His glorified blood. These facts, accordingly, all point to the conclusion that when Jesus said of the bread, "This is My body," He did not mean that it was His body in any literal or objectively real sense that He was giving to His disciples.

But now we must go back to the *breaking* of the bread;

for it was as broken that Jesus offered it to the disciples. We constantly find it asserted by some modern critics that the breaking had no significance whatever, but was merely a necessary preliminary to distribution; and in this way the attempt is made to avoid any reference in the action to the Lord's death.[1] But why, we must ask, in that case should the breaking have been necessary to distribution at all? The loaf was a flat, round cake or scone, in size and shape much more like a large slice of our bread than like what we commonly call a loaf, and thus perfectly adapted, just as it was, for being passed round the circle, as slices of bread are passed along the pews by the elders at a Presbyterian communion service. If distribution was the only purpose which Jesus had in view, why did He not simply hand the bread round the Table, as He afterwards did with the cup of wine? It is difficult to see what special reason He had for breaking it, if in the act of breaking itself there was no particular significance. And when we observe that in every one of the four narratives the fact of the breaking is expressly reported, it seems impossible to believe that it was a mere incident of distribution, to which no significance whatever is to be attached. How unlikely that in all the four narratives of the Supper, narratives which in any case are so pregnant and compressed, this feature of the institution should have been introduced, when it would have perfectly sufficed to say, so far as the meaning of the action was concerned, that Jesus took the bread and gave it to His disciples.

There was a meaning, then, we must hold, in the breaking of the bread. And it seems a very weak explanation when the point of the meaning is found in the notion that the breaking expresses the fact of Christian unity. The late Archbishop Benson, for example, after denying that the act has any reference to the Saviour's

[1] So, *e.g.*, Spitta, *Urchristentum*, 285 f.

death, goes on to say, "The breaking of the bread is intended to convey that there is one loaf, one bread, of which we are all partakers; 'for we all partake of the one bread' (1 Cor. x. 17)."[1] But it is not easy to see how the notion of unity is specially expressed by the act of breaking—an act, one would think, that might more readily be taken to express precisely the opposite idea. Surely if the fact of unity had been the special thought which our Lord desired to convey, He would have done so even more effectively by not breaking the bread, but passing it round the Table just as it was, and allowing each of the circle to partake in turn of the one undivided loaf, as afterwards of the one common cup. There can be little doubt, we think, that the ordinary interpretation is the right one, namely, that Jesus broke the bread with reference to His own approaching death. The objection that on the Cross His body was not broken[2] is exceedingly trivial. Jesus was not giving here by anticipation a mimic representation of His death in all its circumstances, but was referring to the fact of it, and also to its violent and cruel nature; and He could not have expressed these ideas more strikingly than by breaking in two the loaf that He held in His hands.[3]

We must remember that for some time previously Jesus had been preparing His disciples for the great catastrophe that was now imminent, by a course of gradual and progressive instruction on the subject of the Cross. After the glorious confession of faith which Peter made on behalf of them all, He had told His disciples plainly that He must go up to Jerusalem and there be killed (Mark viii. 31 and

[1] *Addresses on Acts*, p. 503. Similarly Dr. Hort speaks of the breaking of bread as a name given to "the expressive act by which the unity of the many as partakers of the one divine sustenance is signified" (*Christian Ecclesia*, p. 44).

[2] So Spitta, *loc. cit.*, and others.

[3] Mr. Wright assumes that Jesus broke the loaf into twelve pieces (*Some New Testament Problems*, p. 141). But there is nothing in the narrative to suggest anything of the kind.

parallels). By and by He went further, and announced that His life was to be given as a ransom for many (Mark x. 45). On a preceding evening in that very week of His passion, when Mary of Bethany anointed His head in the house of Simon the leper, He had described her deed of love as an anointing of His body beforehand for the burying (Mark xiv. 3–9). And even since sitting down at the table that night He had told His disciples that one of them was about to betray Him (Mark xiv. 18–21).[1] This, we are told, had made the disciples "exceeding sorrowful" (Matt. xxvi. 22; cf. Mark xiv. 19). And now, when Jesus broke the bread in the midst of this circle, upon which something of the shadow of death had already descended, and said, "This is My body," how could His hearers think of anything but His death, or fail to see in the broken bread which He described as His body a symbol of the death which He Himself was about to die?[2] There can be little doubt, then, that what we have here was a further lesson imparted to the disciples on the doctrine of the Cross. With our full knowledge of what afterwards took place, and of the purpose of it, we are more apt, as Professor Bruce has said, to explain the Supper by the death than the death by the Supper.[3] But when we put ourselves

[1] Frequently the attempt is made to get rid of our Lord's anticipations of His death by describing them as *post eventum* prophecies interpolated into the narrative. But these sayings form too essential a part of the whole structure of Mark's Gospel to be disposed of in any such fashion, as nearly every one will feel who studies them in their contextual settings.

[2] Weizsäcker, while finding a clear reference to the approaching death in the second part of the Supper, maintains that in the first part the "body" refers not to the death of Christ, but to His living presence in the midst of His people (*Apostolic Age*, ii. 282). But it is much more probable that, as there is an undoubted allusion to His death in the wine which Jesus described as His covenant-blood, there is an allusion to it also in the broken bread. It is very unlikely, as Jülicher remarks, that of two perishable elements, both of which were given to the disciples to be consumed, the one was meant to be a symbol of the Lord's death, and the other of His perpetual living presence (*Theologische Abhandlungen*, p. 242).

[3] *Training of the Twelve*, p. 347.

in the position of the disciples, we see that at first we must look at the other side of the case, and recognise in the Lord's acts and words His purpose of impressing upon His followers not only the near approach of His death, but those views as to its saving worth which He desired them to entertain. And when we keep in mind the evident fact that the disciples at the moment were so little fitted to grasp any doctrinal teaching as to the meaning and purpose of the great sacrifice of the Cross, we shall be inclined to agree with Wendt, that it was a masterpiece of wisdom that Jesus in these circumstances "did not enter upon a theoretical explanation of the significance of His death, which, through the defective understanding of the disciples, would have slipped away without lasting result; but instituted this rite of a sacrificial meal, whose general significance was intelligible to them, and which afforded them for all the future a sure position in order clearly to conceive the view of His death intended by Jesus."[1]

What, then, in fine, may we take to have been the intention and meaning of Jesus when He broke the bread and gave it to His disciples, and said, "This is My body"?

(1) In the first place, He desired to convey a lesson of warning as to the fact that His violent death was near at hand. No doubt it is true that the disciples did not fully grasp this lesson. They heard what Jesus said, but they discounted it. Even though His words that night caused dark shadows to fall across their table of fellowship, by bringing the thought of His death into their minds, they said in their hearts, as Peter said right out on the very first occasion on which Jesus spoke of the end towards which He was journeying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord!" And yet this fact, that Jesus foresaw His death and foretold it, was fixed in their minds by the Supper as by

[1] *Teaching of Jesus*, ii. 328.

nothing else; and the immediate faith with which the word and the evidence of His resurrection were afterwards received, finds its psychological explanation in no small measure in the circumstance that Jesus had Himself foreseen the Cross and forewarned them of it, and had also revealed beforehand its great underlying purpose.

(2) For, in the next place, Jesus meant to teach the disciples that His death was no blind and cruel fate merely, which had overtaken Him in the midst of His days, but a free sacrifice which He was about to offer on their behalf. This was clearly symbolised by the *giving* of the broken bread, and clearly taught by the words "for you," "given for you," which we find in Paul and Luke respectively. It is true that no corresponding words occur in Mark and Matthew; but the idea, as we have seen, is implied in the distribution itself. When Jesus gave the bread to His disciples, they understood by that very gesture that it was given for them; and as what He gave them was *broken* bread, broken bread which He proceeded to designate as His own body, the thought of a sacrifice freely rendered on their behalf was plainly suggested to their minds.

(3) But there was still another moment included in Christ's symbolic action and explanatory word. The broken bread which He gave He invited them to take; and to take, manifestly, not only into their hands, but into their mouths. Matthew alone records the injunction, "Eat"; but, as was shown in the previous lecture, there can be no doubt whatever that the bread was given for the purpose of being eaten, and that it *was* eaten by the disciples. And so this brings us to a further thought, lying enshrined at the very heart of the Supper, that the sacrifice which Jesus offered must be appropriated, and its fruits and virtues assimilated by His disciples; and that, in a sense which was not the less real because it was not corporeal, the

disciples were invited to partake of the body of Christ.[1] We have seen that the historical circumstances entirely preclude the idea that the bread was Christ's body in any literal or objective sense. Moreover, since the breaking of the bread, as we have also seen, pointed manifestly to the Saviour's death, the bread that was offered to the apostles, as thus broken, represented ideas which lie at the very opposite extreme from those notions about a presence in the elements of the Lord's glorified body with which the advocates of realistic theories are accustomed to operate. The bread, broken and given, represented the Saviour's body as given to death, but given freely in a sacrifice of love. And when Jesus invited the disciples to take and eat, that pointed of necessity not to a literal partaking of the crucified body of their Master, but to a spiritual appropriation of the sacrifice of the Cross with all its fruits and benefits. And yet this does not mean that the giving and the eating of the bread were symbols and nothing more, in what is frequently, though wrongly, called the Zwinglian sense.[2] The bread was a symbol, without doubt; and yet

[1] It might be said that if Jesus could not invite His disciples to partake of His glorified body previous to His resurrection and ascension, no more could He invite them to partake of the blessings of His sacrifice before that sacrifice was offered. But the two cases are altogether different. There could be no realistic participation in the glorified body of the Christ while Jesus was sitting at the table in His earthly body and dispensing the bread to the disciples; but He might quite well invite the disciples beforehand to appropriate the spiritual benefits of the sacrifice which He was just about to make, and which in the depths of His will He had made already.

[2] It is only in some of his utterances, when he is protesting against Romish errors, that Zwingli's language suggests that he looked upon the Supper as nothing more than a piece of commemorative symbolism. His complete view amply recognises the sacrament as a positive means of grace, and a real participation in the benefits of the Redeemer's sacrifice. It is just as unfair to judge him by one set of utterances, as it would be to estimate Luther's thoughts upon this subject by his earlier expressions alone. Cf. Professor Orr, *United Presbyterian Magazine*, Oct. 1900, p. 457; Lobstein, *La doctrine de la Sainte Cène*, p. 175; C. Anderson Scott, "Zwingli's Doctrine of the Lord's Supper," *Expositor*, March 1902; and especially Dorner, *Hist. Prot. Theol.* i. 307–314.

the words, "Take: this is My body," were not a mere figure of speech, but rather, as Wendt calls them, "a declaration of value." They are analogous, as he observes, to sayings like "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is My brother, and My sister, and mother" (Mark iii. 35); or, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name, receiveth Me" (Matt. xviii. 5). No one imagines, on reading such words, that those who do God's will are miraculously transformed into the blood-kindred of Jesus of Nazareth, or that the Lord Himself becomes incarnate, in His essential personality, in a little child who is received in His name. And yet these sayings are not mere figures, but declarations of great spiritual truths, the truths, namely, that obedience to God brings us into a real spiritual relation with Jesus Christ, and that the Lord values an act of kindness done to a little child in His own name precisely as if it had been done to Himself.[1]

So it was at the Supper. The broken bread was a symbol of Christ's body given to death, but the invitation to take and eat was an invitation to receive at the same time the blessings of Christ's sacrifice which the broken bread symbolised. Jesus offered Himself in offering the symbols of Himself. It is difficult, if not impossible, under any view of the Supper which regards it as a mere representation of the Lord's sacrifice, to account satisfactorily for the invitation to take and eat, associated as it is with so express a declaration regarding the bread as, "This is My Body." From the days of Paul until now, the actions and language of Jesus at the Table have always suggested to the vast majority of Christian minds, that an invitation is given in the sacrament to a real appropriation of Jesus Christ and the blessings of His salvation. To think of that appropriation as realised after any kind of corporeal

[1] *Teaching of Jesus*, ii. 325.

manner, however subtle,[1] is, without doubt, to misread the situation utterly. But all the more truly, because spiritually, Jesus invites His people to feed at the Table in a unique and special manner upon the fruits of His great sacrifice of love, and upon Himself as bound up with His blessings, and to find as they do so that He is the very Bread of Life to the souls that hunger to receive Him.

II. The conclusions to which we have been led with regard to the first part of the Supper simplify our task, so far, when we pass to a consideration of the second part. The leading thoughts that we have found to be expressed in the breaking and giving and designation of the bread are all repeated, and repeated with even greater clearness, in the case of the cup. Here also there is the thought of the approaching death. There is no pouring out of the wine, it is true, to correspond with the breaking of the loaf;[2] but an act of pouring, as a parallel to the bread-breaking, was quite unnecessary in order to symbolise the approaching death, since the wine itself stood for blood, and for blood, moreover, as outpoured (ἐκχυννόμενον). Here, too, the death that was now at hand is represented not as an untoward accident or an inexorable fate, but as a sacrifice freely offered on behalf of others. The blood is the blood of a covenant-sacrifice "poured out for many." And here, once more, the blessings of this covenant-sacrifice require to be appropriated; for Jesus gave the cup to His

[1] The subtlety that frequently meets us may be illustrated by the remark of Mr. W. R. Carson in his *Eucharistic Eirenicon*, that the "Presence" is "not to be thought of as corporeal, except in so far as it is the presence of a *Corpus*"; or by the favourite expression of some modern Anglicans to describe the nature of the *bodily* gift that is communicated in the Eucharist, "the spiritual principle of our Lord's manhood."

[2] A pouring out of the wine (presumably from some larger vessel into the cup) is constantly assumed as a part of the symbolism, thus forming a parallel to the breaking of the bread. But our narratives say nothing about this; and we have no right to introduce the idea as a significant part of the procedure.

disciples and bade them drink of it, and they all drank of it in obedience to His word.

But, in keeping with that method of our Lord in His double parables to which reference has already been made, the second part of the Supper not only re-echoes the leading ideas of the first part, but gives expression to other ideas which in the first part found no place. The two distinctively novel features are the mention of the new covenant, and the reference to a coming feast in the kingdom of God.

1. The very striking idea of the new covenant is set before us in more aspects than one. Not only is the cup brought into relation to the new covenant, but there is an evident allusion to the covenant-sacrifice in the mention of the covenant-blood, and a further allusion to the covenant-meal in the invitation to drink of the covenant-cup. Now, frequently the attempt has been made to find within the circle of ideas suggested by the Passover a complete explanation of what Jesus says here with regard to the new covenant. But it is almost impossible to do this without having recourse to archæological considerations drawn from the study of primitive religions, with the view of showing an original connection between the Passover and the ancient rite of the blood-covenant.[1] And, while this line of inquiry is exceedingly interesting in itself, it can hardly be said to have a direct bearing upon the intention of Jesus at the Supper. For He, at all events, did not speak in any archæological interest. Even if we were to suppose that the knowledge of the Son of Man in the days of His humiliation extended to matters of this kind, it is not likely that His words to His disciples that night contained allusions the meaning of which would remain insoluble until such time as the study of Comparative Religion had become a special historical discipline. Whatever

[1] See, *e.g.*, Trumbull, *The Threshold Covenant*, p. 203 ff.

primitive rites the Passover may have been originally connected with, and whatever different associations may have gathered round it in the course of Hebrew history, it can hardly be professed that it suggested to the Jews of our Lord's time the thought of a blood-covenant in the sense of certain primitive religious rites; and it was with the contemporary Passover that Jesus had to do, not with any modern theories as to its origin and primitive connections.

The analogy of the Passover, therefore, does not fully explain to us the words which Jesus spoke at the Supper. On the other hand, ideas which it fails to account for are at once rendered intelligible by reference to the covenant at Sinai, and to the announcements of the prophets regarding a new covenant that should be realised in the Messianic days. It is one of the merits possessed by most of the recent critical discussions of the Lord's Supper, that they bring clearly into view the bearing of our Lord's words at the institution of the Supper upon the story of the Sinaitic covenant. We read in the twenty-fourth chapter of Exodus how Moses, after the giving of the Law, offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord; and then took half of the blood and sprinkled it upon the altar, and the other half and sprinkled it upon the people, saying, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words" (Exod. xxiv. 3–8). It seems almost certain that when Jesus spoke of His covanant-blood He referred to that covenant which was ratified at Sinai by sacrifice, and by the sprinkling of blood, in part upon the altar as a symbol of the offering of the victim's life to God, and in part upon the people as a token of their purification and their consecration to Jehovah.[1]

[1] That the sacrifice was essentially piacular is hardly to be doubted. See the remarks of Professor A. B. Davidson (*Dictionary of the Bible*, i. 512) in qualification of statements made by Professor W. Robertson Smith in his *Religion of the Semites*, p. 461.

But as the words of Jesus carry us back to the story of the ancient covenant, they also refer, not less evidently, to the utterances of the great prophets as to another covenant, more glorious than the first, which God should yet make with His people. The mind of Jesus was largely nourished, as we know, by the visions and promises of the Old Testament prophets; indeed, no influence contributed more powerfully than this to the growth of His Messianic self-consciousness. He knew how one prophet after another had spoken of "a covenant of peace," and "an everlasting covenant," lying not in the past of Israel but in better days to come" (Jer. xxxii. 40; Ezek. xxxiv. 25, xxxvii. 26; Isa. lv. 3, etc.). And in particular there was one magnificent passage in Jeremiah to which at this point He appears to attach Himself immediately. In it the covenant of the future is more fully described than elsewhere, and is discriminated as "a new covenant," the law of which will be written in the heart, from the old covenant which had its law written on tables of stone (Jer. xxxi. 31–34). Thus in the new covenant of prophecy, as well as in the old one of history, the words of Jesus find their explanation. But while Jeremiah in his splendid vision of the Messianic days had said nothing as to the way in which the new covenant was to be established (for though he speaks of the forgiveness of sins as one of its characteristics, he has no revelation to make as to the divine method of forgiveness), Jesus proclaims that the new covenant, just like the old one, must rest upon sacrifice, and must be sealed with blood.

It seems clear, therefore, that for the proper interpretation of this part of the Supper we must look to the connection of Christ's words both with the old covenant of the law and the new covenant predicted by the prophets. But it does not follow that the thought of the Passover is not still present. Some recent investigators who have

worked out very fully the connection between the Supper and the covenant have insisted that the idea of the Passover was altogether absent from the mind of Jesus. In particular, it has been said that the covenant and the Passover are so utterly distinct that a combination of their respective ideas was not possible, or would, at all events, have been unintelligible to the disciples.[1] But we must rather hold that while the two were historically distinct, there was the closest affinity between them, and that that affinity was brought to expression at this very point. It is true that the original Passover must not be confounded with the covenant at Sinai. But the story of the Passover in Egypt undoubtedly foreshadows the narrative of the formal covenant at Sinai; indeed, apart from the former, the latter would lack its true historical explanation. And in the time of our Lord the annual Passovers of the Jewish people, whatever they may have been originally, were of the nature of covenanting feasts, at which the covenant with Jehovah was periodically renewed. And so, while in the mind of Jesus there was no confusion of historical facts that were separate and distinct, there appears to have been a fusion of ideas that were naturally related. With that perfect insight into the very heart of the old faith, combined with absolute freedom in dealing with its forms, which is one of the justifications of His claim to be the Christ, Jesus not only superseded the old covenant by the new, and the Passover by the Supper, but drew ideas from both the Passover and the covenant, and brought them to final expression in the Communion feast of the New Testament Church.

Now, when we read this saying of Jesus about the new covenant in the light of all these considerations, there are certain conclusions to which we seem to be led.

(1) In the first place, it is evident that our Lord here declares that the time of the Messianic covenant foretold by

[1] Schultzen, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

the prophets has at length arrived, and that the old covenant of Moses is about to be superseded by a new and a better covenant. Sometimes the attempt is made to take this reference to the new covenant out of the mouth of Jesus altogether, and to explain it as a purely Pauline phrase which has somehow found its way into the original story of the Supper. But while it is undoubtedly true that Paul has a certain doctrine regarding the old and the new covenants, which he unfolds in a manner that is quite his own, there is not the slightest ground for alleging that Jesus could not have spoken the words about His covenant-blood, or the new covenant in His blood, which are attributed to Him in our narratives, more especially when we consider how thoroughly these words harmonise with the prophetic teaching upon the subject, and above all with the great utterance of Jeremiah.

(2) But further, Jesus here affirms that as the ancient covenant of Sinai was ratified by sacrifice, this new covenant which He is about to establish must be sealed with His own blood. And here it seems evident that the sacrifice which Jesus has immediately in view, and into special relation with which He brings the thought of His own death, is not the annually repeated sacrifice of the Passover lamb, but the covenant sacrifice which Moses offered at Sinai. The Mosaic covenant of which we read in Exodus was established once for all, and established by a single act of sacrifice; and so also must it be with the new covenant of which Jesus was to be the Mediator. It could be established only once, and a single great sacrifice was all that was needed to establish it for ever. And if the thought of the paschal lamb blends itself at the Supper with the thought of the covenant-sacrifice, the combination of ideas is explained not merely by the circumstance that the Passover meal was the actual occasion of the institution of the covenant-meal of the new dispensation, but by the fact

that all the sacrifices of the Jewish law were related to the one fundamental thought of a covenant with God based upon sacrifice; while in the course of Jewish history the Passover meal in particular had become the great recurring occasion for the renewal on the human side of that national covenant which, as every Jew believed, God had made at Sinai with the fathers once for all.

(3) But, again, we have to notice that the words of Jesus implied that this Supper, of which He invites His disciples to partake, is of the nature of a covenant-meal based upon the fact of a covenant-sacrifice. It was an idea very familiar to the Jew that an act of sacrifice should be accompanied by a sacrificial meal, in which the worshippers expressed their covenant fellowship at once with God and one another. In the story of the covenant at Sinai we appear to have in the words, "Also they saw God, and did eat and drink" (Exod. xxiv. 11), an allusion to the fact that the sacrifice of the covenant was followed by a joyous sacrificial meal. And in Jewish history the Passover meal had come to be, in point of fact, a continually recurring opportunity for a covenant-meal based upon the fact of the original covenant with its covenant-sacrifice.[1] Primarily, no doubt, the Passover of Jewish history was regarded as a memorial of the deliverance from Egypt; but at the same time it was the national covenant-feast of the Jewish people, in which they definitely renewed for their part that covenant with the God of redemption which Moses, as they believed, had made at Sinai on their behalf.

[1] Cf. Holtzmann: "Auch das Passahfest hatte damals seinen ursprünglichen Charakter als Sühnfeier längst mit dem eines Bundesmahles vertauscht" (*N. T. Theologie*, i. 302). This, however, must be taken with qualifications. It is perhaps correct to say that the Passover in the time of Jesus was thought of mainly as the occasion of a covenant-meal; but it does not follow that the idea of propitiation was lost sight of in connection with the Passover sacrifice. Rather, as Dr. Denney has said, "we have every reason to believe that sacrificial blood universally, and not only in special cases, was associated with propitiatory power" (*Death of Christ*, p. 53).

And here we may notice that it is of very little use for the proper understanding either of the Passover as we meet with it in the time of Christ, or of the Lord's Supper as a religious meal that sprang out of the pre-existing Passover, to concern ourselves with suggestions drawn from the study of primitive religions as to an "eating of the god" at the time of a harvest festival, or as to communion between the deity and his worshippers through common participation in the blood of a slain animal.[1] For whatever may have been the case in the early Semitic worship, on the one hand, and, on the other, in those heathen mystery-cults of the Roman Empire which had so marked an effect at a later stage upon the sacramental doctrine and practices of the Christian Church, it was not in such ways that the Passover was conceived of at that period, and least of all, we may be sure, by our Lord Himself and His apostles. No Jew of that time, much less Jesus of Nazareth, was capable of imagining either that God could be literally partaken of, or that God Himself would literally partake of human food. And especially it is ridiculous to suppose that we get any help to a proper understanding of the Passover in the time of Christ by bringing in the idea that the blood of the Passover lamb, or the wine of the paschal supper considered as a definite surrogate for blood, was jointly partaken of by Jehovah and His worshippers. For in the Jewish law blood was offered to Jehovah not with any idea that He would partake of it, but as a piacular sacrifice, and on the principle

[1] On the "eating of the god," see Frazer's *Golden Bough*, 2nd edition, vol. ii. chap. ii.; and on the common participation of blood on the part of a god and his worshippers, Robertson Smith's *Religion of the Semites*, p. 461. Neither of these distinguished scholars, it is true, attempts to make these primitive conceptions bear directly on the institution of the Supper by Jesus; but their statements are frequently used for this purpose by some modern advocates of the corporeal view of Christ's presence in the sacrament. It is worth noting that there is a growing tendency to hesitate about accepting the Wellhausen-Smith theory that the sacrificial meal was the earliest form of sacrifice. See Professor W. P. Paterson in article "Sacrifice," *Dictionary of the Bible*, iv. 332; Professor S. I. Curtiss in his *Primitive Semitic Religion To-day*, p. 218 ff.

that the blood was the very life of the victim (Lev. xvii. 11). And, on the other hand, so far were the Jews, as we know them in history, from harbouring any notion that the worshippers of Jehovah might enter into communion with Him by joint participation in the blood of an animal, or in something else that might be considered as a suitable substitute for blood, that nothing was more absolutely abhorrent to them than the bare thought of partaking of blood in any shape or form (cf. Lev. vii. 26, 27, xvii. 10). How deeply this feeling was rooted in the Jewish mind at the dawn of the Christian era is shown by the well-known apostolic decree, which was drawn up not by rabbis but by Christian apostles and elders, and addressed by them not to Israelites, but to the Gentile members of the primitive Church; but in which, nevertheless, abstention from things strangled and from blood is set side by side with the avoidance of the gravest moral offences as a duty that must be enjoined upon them as a "necessary thing" (Acts xv. 19, 20, 28, 29).

When Jesus and His disciples ate the Passover lamb and drank the Passover wine, the meal in its chief aspects was a memorial of a great historical deliverance, and an opportunity in an appointed ritual way of renewing their allegiance to the God of redemption, who was also the God of the covenant, and of binding themselves more closely together in the bonds of a common brotherhood. The wine, it should be remembered, was not enjoined in the Old Testament law, and formed no part of the original Passover meal. The fact that it afterwards came to be regarded as an essential constituent of the feast, and the generous allowance of four cupfuls to each person, points not to the conclusion that it was accepted as a substitute for the drinking of sacrificial blood, since there is not the slightest trace that at an earlier period of the historical Passover blood had been partaken of before wine was introduced, but rather to this, that in the post-exilic days the festive and

social side of the observance had been more fully developed.[1] And so, when Jesus at the Table took some of the wine of the Passover meal and gave it to His disciples, saying, "This is My covenant-blood," there was nothing in the earlier ritual use of the wine to suggest the thought, so repulsive to Jewish feelings, that He was giving them His blood to drink in any kind of objective sense. He took the red wine as a natural and striking symbol of the sacrificial blood which He was about to offer for the establishment of the new covenant. And He invited them to drink of this wine, because by so doing they would be partaking of a covenant-meal which He was appointing in connection with His great covenant-sacrifice, and thereby sharing in the fruits and blessings of the sacrifice itself. We have seen already that the idea of a literal participation of Christ's body on the part of the disciples is surrounded by insuperable difficulties. Still greater and more numerous are the difficulties that beset the idea that in any literal sense they drank His blood. The very imagination of such a thing was so utterly repugnant to the natural sensibilities of a Jew of those days, that if the disciples had understood Jesus to be speaking realistically, it is hardly conceivable that there would not have been in the historical narratives some trace of their astonishment, and even of their hesitation to drink of the cup. But when, on the other hand, we understand, as the apostles without doubt understood, that Jesus was employing the wine as a symbol, all these difficulties immediately disappear. It does not even greatly concern us whether He said "This is My covenant-blood" or "This is the new covenant in My blood"—a point that always stumbles the literalist.[2] For the wine might quite

[1] Cf. the further introduction into the later Passover of the *charoseth*, a dish composed of bruised dates, raisins, and other fruits, spiced with vinegar—of which we have no trace in the Old Testament.

[2] It is worth noting that, in all the four narratives, it is not of the wine but of the cup that Jesus speaks. Those therefore who insist, in the first part of the

well symbolise both the blood of Christ's sacrifice and the covenant which was established by His blood; standing in itself for the blood, but as taken and drunk representing the personal acceptance by a disciple of the new covenant with all its benefits.

But here, again, as in the case of the bread, we have to notice that, while the wine in itself was a symbol and nothing more, as offered by Jesus to His disciples in the Supper it acquires a more positive spiritual value. Through the word and appointment of the Lord it becomes one of the elements in the covenant-feast of the new dispensation, a feast which celebrates Christ's sacrifice of Himself and the establishment of the new covenant thereby. The wine in itself was only a symbol, but Christ's summons to participation raised the drinking of it on the part of His true disciples into something much more than a symbol. To drink in faith of this cup is to share in the New Testament covenant-meal of redemption, to appropriate the blessings of the Redeemer's sacrifice, and, since Christ is ever inseparable from His own blessings, to appropriate Christ Himself as He is freely offered to us in the gospel.

2. But besides the idea of the new covenant, there is another feature in the second part of the Supper which has no parallel in the first part, namely, the remarkable saying, "I will no more drink of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in the kingdom of God" (Matt. xxvi. 29; cf. Mark xiv. 25; Luke xxii. 18). In the previous lecture it was maintained that, on critical grounds, these words must be read in the place in which we find them in Mark and Matthew, and not in the position given them by Luke; and so must be understood as referring not

Supper, that Christ's words must be interpreted with absolute literalness, and that *Hoc est corpus Meum* can only mean, "This bread is in very reality My body," are obliged, on coming to the second part, to abandon their principle of strict literalness. The cup is at once assumed to be used figuratively for the wine that it contains.

to one of the cups of the Passover meal, but to the cup of the Lord's Supper itself. This being so, it follows, as we have seen, that Jesus must Himself have partaken of the cup of communion; and it follows, further, that while He had symbolically described the cup as His covenant-blood, He did not regard the contents of the cup as anything else than the fruit of the vine. But what we have to notice now is the broader bearings of this utterance. The saying evidently has two aspects, a dark and a bright. On the one hand, it renews yet again the intimation that the Lord's death is very near: "I will drink no more of this fruit of the vine"; but, on the other, it gives the promise of a joyful reunion and fellowship between Jesus and His disciples in the consummated kingdom of God: "I will drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." It is the same two aspects by which Paul's mind is held when he sums up in a sentence what he appears to regard as the leading characteristics of the Lord's Supper: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim *the Lord's death—till He come.*"

Now, of these two features of the saying, the one which brought into view the Saviour's death was central, as we have found, to the whole institution; and Jesus had clearly presented it more than once at the Table already—by breaking the bread, and by designating the broken bread as His body and the wine as His blood poured out on behalf of others. But the second or eschatological feature, which here finds expression for the first time, was one, we must believe, of great importance in our Lord's view of the institution; though it has frequently had less than justice done to it in the doctrinal and liturgical formulations of the Church. Some of the modern critical writers, on the other hand, have done more than justice to it, for they have presented it in an altogether exaggerated form. Spitta, for instance, entirely rejects the

idea that Jesus at the Supper made any reference to His death, and insists that it is only when our Lord's words are regarded from the eschatological point of view that they can be rightly understood. The covenant of which Jesus spoke, he tells us, was the Davidic-Messianic covenant, which is sometimes presented, alike in Old Testament prophecy and in the eschatological discourses of Jesus Himself, under the aspect of a great banquet or wedding-feast, at which the righteous as honoured guests shall be nourished with wonderful food and drink. It is this food and drink of the Messianic meal of the consummation which Jesus offers to His disciples at the Table; and as participation in that meal was sometimes figuratively described as partaking of the Messiah Himself, He could figuratively invite them to eat of His body and drink of His blood. But from beginning to end the Supper was essentially an anticipative feast. In the very hour when death drew near, Jesus prophetically saw Himself sitting with His disciples at the great banqueting-table in the perfected kingdom of God, distributing His heavenly blessings; and He gave them the bread and the wine as a pledge that for those who now received Him to themselves that glorious future hour should come.[1] But Spitta's construction, though worked out with great ingenuity, is too arbitrary in its treatment of Scripture, and altogether too subjective, to be convincing. Paul's testimony, in particular, as to the fact that Jesus designed the Supper to be a memorial of His death is not to be swept aside in the airy fashion which this writer adopts. And even Schweitzer, who has made one of the latest and most elaborate attempts to deal with the problems of the Supper, while he subjects Spitta to some just criticisms, and fully acknowledges for his own part the emphasis laid by our Lord on the thought of His death,

[1] *Urchristentum*, especially p. 282 ff.

has nevertheless been led into an over-estimation of the eschatological bearings of the Supper by his general view that the fundamental feature of the secret of Christ's passion is the eschatological realisation of the kingdom of God.[1]

But if such representations err on the side of excess, they have at least done good service by bringing into prominence the fact that the high and solemn words with which Jesus concluded the institution of the Supper prove that He meant it to have a real and a close connection with the hopes of His people for the future world. We see that this saying was no mere appendage to what had gone before, but was inseparably bound up with what He had already said regarding His death, and formed indeed the reverse side of the latter, so that there is a true organic relation between the thought of the passion and the promise of a blessed reunion in the heavenly kingdom. As for the time when this blessed reunion should take place, it is plain that Jesus was referring not to the days just after His resurrection, nor yet to any future Communion experiences of His disciples on earth, but to their final blessedness in the kingdom of the consummation. That He sometimes spoke of the kingdom of God in this special eschatological sense there is no doubt. For while He constantly taught that the kingdom of God was already come, He looked to the future heavenly state for its perfected form, and because that perfected form was the true and proper and ideal form of its existence, He sometimes described it distinctively as the kingdom of God (Mark ix. 1; Luke xiii. 28 f., xxii. 29 f.). And in the present case it seems evident that by the kingdom of God, or His Father's kingdom, He means the heavenly and perfected state, inasmuch as He expressly contrasts it

[1] *Das Abendmahl:* Erstes Heft, "Das Abendmahlsproblem," p. 61 ff.; Zweites Heft, "Das Messianitäts- und Leidensgeheimniss," p. 13.

with the present one, in which the divine kingdom can be only imperfectly realised.

As regards what Jesus says about drinking the new wine in that kingdom of the future, the language, of course, is figurative.[1] During His ministry our Lord had more than once depicted the future condition of the righteous under the figure of participation in a feast.[2] And this is what He does here. The feast speaks of joy and fellowship, fellowship with Himself, fellowship of His disciples with one another. His emphatic teaching as to the unlikeness of the resurrection life to the earthly life of time and sense (Mark xii. 24, 25) shows that there can be no thought of any kind of satisfaction of carnal needs and desires. Hence it serves little purpose to discuss the meaning of the word *καινός*, or to say, as even Meyer does, that it points to a new quality of wine. All surmising in this direction is vain, and, as Professor Bruce remarks, only "turns poetry into prose, and pathos into bathos."[3] It is useless in a case like this to seek to inquire curiously as to what is figure and what is fact.[4] What we may regard as certain is that Jesus here turns the sacred meal into a pledge of a joyful reunion in the heavenly future. He had made the thought of death and parting very prominent at the Table, but He would now show His disciples that this very thought, so painful in itself, carried glad consequences with it. In John's Gospel we read how the Lord said in His discourse after Supper, "If I go . . . I will come again" (John xiv. 3). And

[1] It is not to be wondered at that advocates of the various "Catholic" views are unwilling to accept this saying as having any reference to the Supper. For it would be difficult to explain, on the lines of literalism, how Jesus is to drink wine in the kingdom of God. The wine is called "new," no doubt; but its newness does not alter the fact that it is described in its fundamental character as "the fruit of the vine."

[2] See especially the parables of the Ten Virgins and the Great Supper.

[3] *Expositor's Greek Testament*, note on Matt. xxvi. 29.

[4] See Holtzmann in *Hand-Commentar*, Mark xiv. 25.

here we find Him giving a definite place to this very same promise within the circle of ideas that belong to the Supper itself. It is a familiar experience that painful partings often carry within the heart of them suggestions of happy meetings, and that love, anticipating the future, can "make the tears of farewell sparkle into welcomes."[1] But what meets us here is something very much better than the mere utterance of the half-fearful hope which springs up in the hearts of friends who are about to be severed. Here Jesus gives His disciples the express promise of a blessed re-assembling in His company; and not only so, He turns the very observance of this parting meal into an outward reminder and pledge of the promise He gives. For He did not merely look forward beyond death with the full assurance that He should presently be set at His Father's right hand, but knew that His disciples also would attain along with Him to the life of heavenly felicity. "Because I live, ye shall live also," He said a little afterwards (John xiv. 19). And for Christ's disciples this assurance is embodied in the Lord's Supper itself. The sacrament is a foretaste of the heavenly feast which they shall enjoy when their Lord shall come again and receive them unto Himself, so that where He is there they may be also.

It is questionable whether doctrinally and liturgically the Church has made enough of this eschatological aspect of the Supper. Christian feeling, no doubt, here as elsewhere, supplies what is lacking, and our Communion hymns make up in some measure for the defects of our articulated teaching and ritual practice.[2] But it is perhaps to be regretted, nevertheless, that these words of the Lord

[1] Dr. John Ker, *Sermons*, First Series, p. 146.

[2] Spitta points out that the utterances of evangelical piety, especially as we meet with them in the hymns of the Lutheran Church, give a prominence to the eschatological aspect of the Supper which is not found in the Confessional doctrine. *Op. cit.*, p. 333 ff.

Jesus have not received their rightful place either in the formal liturgies or the unwritten Communion formulas of the various Christian Churches.[1] Paul's words, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come," one hears continually at the Communion Table—often quoted, moreover, in such a way as to suggest that they are the very words of Jesus, and formed a part of the original institution. But here are words which hold a better claim than those even of the great apostle to be used in the celebration of the Supper, —words which, if so used, would bring regularly before the participants a feature of the rite which was strongly present to the mind of Jesus Christ Himself at the Supper in the upper room, and which, in the most striking and memorable way, He sought to impress upon the minds of His disciples.

III. The only other matter that now remains for consideration is the question whether our Lord intended and directed that the Supper should be repeated as a memorial of Himself. As we saw in the preceding lecture, there are those who deny any such intention or direction, and who endeavour to make out that the original Supper was not the founding of an institution, but simply a touching incident of the last hours of Jesus. We have already considered this question so far as regards the claim to authenticity of the saying, "This do in remembrance of Me." And after the full discussion of the historical character of these words, comparatively little now remains to be said. For, unlike the words at the giving of the bread and the cup, it is the authenticity of the present saying that is in question, not its significance. If we have established the fact that such words were actually spoken by Jesus,

[1] Stier quotes Thiersch as saying in his *Lectures on Catholicism and Protestantism*, "These words should never be omitted in the sacramental liturgy." See his *Words of the Lord Jesus*, vol. vii. p. 167.

it is unnecessary to discuss their meaning; since it is perfectly evident that they turn the symbolic meal of that night in which Jesus was betrayed into an institution for the future, which Christ's disciples are bound to observe through all the days until He come.

We must draw attention, however, to the fact that the question of the institutional character of the Lord's Supper is not to be decided solely by a discussion of the particular words, "This do in remembrance of Me." Those who deny that there was any institution by Jesus of a memorial rite, depend to a certain extent upon considerations of a wider kind as to the original character and purpose of the Last Supper; while those who affirm the institution have other reasons for doing so besides the express injunction which is recorded by Paul and Luke. In opposition to the traditional view that Jesus meant the Supper to be repeated as a memorial of His death, such considerations are sometimes alleged as that it was inconsistent with His humility to seek to be remembered in such a way, or that one who said at that very Table, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom," evidently expected His return to take place so speedily that He could not have thought it necessary to institute a memorial feast at all.[1] Perhaps a free use of exclamation marks is the best reply to arguments like these. It may be pointed out, however, that the humility of Jesus was never incompatible with His Messianic consciousness, as the Gospels frequently show; and that even though He did not know the day and the hour of His return (Mark xiii. 32), He would naturally desire, none the less, to be lovingly remembered by His disciples during the interval of absence, whether it were short or long. Just as little weight can be attached

[1] So Jülicher, *Theologische Abhandlungen*, p. 245.

to the contention that Jesus never cared for forms, and therefore did not create any form in the hour of His departure.[1] For this is simply a begging of the question, and an ignoring at the same time of the very essential distinction between the days when the Bridegroom was present with His friends and the days after He was taken away. Symbols and memorials of Jesus were, of course, unnecessary so long as the Lord Himself was visibly set in the midst of His disciples; but it by no means follows that it was impossible for Him to institute a memorial meal as a means of recalling His person to their memories and imparting His grace to their souls after His visible presence was withdrawn. We must remember, too, that Jesus appointed the Supper to be, above all, a memorial of His death; and, in the nature of things, He would not institute a rite to commemorate His death until the hour of His death had arrived.

These wider objections to the institutional character of the original Supper appear, therefore, to be exceedingly weak, and to do very little to support the argument that is based upon the absence of an express injunction from Jesus in the narratives of the first two evangelists. And against them we have now to set the fact that there are various general considerations which go far to confirm the explicit testimony of Paul and Luke that Jesus commanded the feast to be repeated.

(1) Among these, special weight must be laid upon the occasion and historical connections and associations of the Last Supper. If the Passover feast, as we have seen reason to believe, was the soil out of which the Lord's Supper sprang, if it was the bread and wine of a paschal meal that Jesus took into His hands and designated as His body and blood, if the new covenant mediated by the Lord's death is set over-against the ancient covenant that

[1] Spitta, *Urchristentum*, p. 288.

was established at Sinai by sacrifice, the inference is obvious that the covenant-meal of the New Testament falls heir to the memorial character which was borne by the paschal supper as the covenant-meal of the earlier dispensation. In this way Mark and Matthew themselves appear as witnesses to the Lord's intention to institute a Supper for lasting observance by His followers. For they both make the connections of the Supper with a preceding Passover meal exceedingly clear and prominent.[1] But since, by common admission, they fully shared with the rest of the Church the belief that Jesus designed the Supper to be repeated, and since they make so plain the fact that the original Supper was grafted on to a paschal meal, and was observed with constituent elements of that meal, and observed as the feast of the new covenant, it does not seem too much to say that, even though they have not set down the words, "This do in remembrance of Me," they are really testifying in their narratives to the truth that Jesus designed the Supper to be repeated as a memorial of His death, and made His intention thoroughly manifest to His disciples.

(2) Another consideration that goes far to confirm us in this conviction, lies in the undoubted fact that from the very first the Supper was actually repeated, and in the further fact that, from an early time at all events, this repetition was believed to rest upon an injunction of the Lord. The various theories that have been framed to account for these things on purely psychological grounds must be pronounced to be singular failures. They do not really explain in any reasonable manner how it came to pass that from the beginning the disciples met together for the sacramental "breaking of bread" (Acts ii. 42),

[1] Spitta, as we have seen, escapes the force of this fact only by excising, as later interpolations, the express statements in Mark with regard to the observance of the Passover by Jesus. *Op. cit.*, p. 226 ff.

or how the whole Church, including the original apostles themselves, believed that Jesus had meant them to do so. Paul's narrative in 1 Corinthians, he tells us, is just what he had "delivered" to his Corinthian converts by word of mouth when he first came among them; and what he delivered in Corinth was, without doubt, what he delivered wherever he went regarding the origin and purpose of the Lord's Supper. That he had received from the Jerusalem apostles themselves the tradition which he thus handed on to others, is the general view of critical writers. But it is difficult to suppose that Paul introduced such words as "This do in remembrance of Me" into his account of the Supper if he did not receive them from the apostolic circle; and it is also hard to believe that he could go on repeating them in the Churches to which he ministered without being taken to task for doing so, if the Jerusalem apostles had known the statement to be incorrect. And yet there is never the least sign of any controversy between Paul and the original body of the apostles as to whether or not Jesus had enjoined the repetition of the Supper as a memorial of Himself.

(3) I shall only add that among the strongest arguments in favour of the institutional character of the Supper are the curious reasons which those who deny its right to this character frequently allege for maintaining that it should never cease, notwithstanding, to be observed in the Christian Church. Schmiedel, for example, after expressing his regret that the Reformers committed the mistake, as he considers it, of making institution by Jesus the distinctive feature of baptism and the Lord's Supper, a feature to which he holds that these sacraments have no proper claim, goes on to inform us that if there were no such rites as these in the practice of the Church, we should immediately have to invent corresponding ones for ourselves.[1] A statement like

[1] *Protestantische Monatshefte*, Jahrgang III. Heft iv. p. 138.

this is exceedingly instructive. It shows how even a mind so fond of negations as Professor Schmiedel's is unable to escape from the impression that the Lord's Supper is a necessary institution of the Church of Christ, which ought to be perpetually repeated. And, again, it reminds us that very much of the present-day objection to the institution of the sacrament by our Lord rests ultimately upon certain prepossessions with regard to His nature, according to which a very low estimate is formed of His wisdom, to say nothing of His divinity. For Schmiedel implies that while Jesus did not foresee, and make some provision for, the institutional requirements of His Church, we of to-day, with an insight into the true nature and needs of Christianity which was denied to the Son of Man Himself, would at once proceed to manufacture two such sacraments as baptism and the Lord's Supper—if it did not so happen that we find them already in existence. It is much easier after all, at least for those who retain anything worth calling faith in Jesus Christ, to believe that He anticipated the wisdom of His critics in understanding the religious necessities of His community, and that by His whole procedure at the original Supper—by His connecting it with a paschal meal and with the thought of the new covenant, as well as by the express injunction, "This do in remembrance of Me," He ordained the eucharistic sacrament to be continually observed by His people until that day when He shall drink with them anew in the kingdom of God.

And now to sum up all that has been said. In looking for the significance of the original Supper of Jesus, we must distinguish generally between its immediate didactic value and its special purposes as an institution. Even if Jesus had not meant to create an institution for the Church, it is evident that certain great facts and truths were imparted to the disciples by His acts and words at the Last Supper. This was the last lesson which He gave them on the

doctrine of the Cross, and it was far richer in meaning than anything He had said on the subject before. For now He not only announced to them that His death was near, and that it was to be a sacrifice on behalf of others, but declared that by His death He would establish the new covenant of grace and truth. At this point some interpreters of the Supper would stop, from the idea that what Jesus did and said at the Table had no other purpose than to instruct His disciples by means of a wonderful parable, the last and greatest of all His parables, and that He never designed that the observances of that night should be repeated, much less erected into a permanent institution for the Church. Here, however, we cannot stop, since we feel bound to maintain, on the plain evidence of the New Testament, and on every ground of historic probability as well, that Jesus both intended and instructed that the Supper should be repeated, and that His purpose was that it should become a regular ordinance for the Christian Church. So regarded, its meaning in the mind of Christ appears, in the main, to have been threefold:—

(1) In the first place, it was designed to be a commemoration of His own death of sacrifice, by which the new covenant was established. This is shown by its connection with the memorial feast of the old dispensation out of which it sprang, as well as by the express injunction in which its chief purpose is clearly summed up, "This do in remembrance of Me."

(2) In the next place, it was meant to be a means of communion. There was to be a real communion in it with Christ Himself—a truth which is indicated by the fact that Jesus not only used the bread and wine as symbols of His body and blood, but gave them to His disciples to eat and drink; and further, by the circumstance that as His death was represented as the sacrifice of the new covenant, the Supper was thereby shown to be the covenant-meal of the

new dispensation, in which, as in other covenant-meals, a genuine fellowship was established between the members of the covenant and their head. In this latter aspect of it as a covenant-feast, the Lord's Supper was also intended to be the occasion of a communion not only of Christians with Christ, but of fellow-Christians with one another.

(3) Once more, it was a pledge of Christ's promised return, and a foretaste of a fuller fellowship between Him and His disciples in the consummated kingdom of God.

LECTURE VIII.

The Lord's Supper in the Primitive Church: Its Outward Connections and Forms.

I. Hitherto we have been dealing with the original Supper of Jesus in the upper room—the circumstances in which it took place, the acts and words that the Lord made use of, and the significance that attaches to those acts and words. We pass now to the Supper as it was observed and thought of in the primitive community. And here again, as in the case of the original Supper, it will be convenient to speak first of the external relations and forms of the sacrament, reserving questions of doctrinal significance for separate consideration. It is with the former only that we shall be concerned in the present lecture.

1. Our materials at this point, it must be confessed, are scanty, and a good deal of room is left for conjecture. Practically, the New Testament evidence is confined to two passages in the Book of Acts and two in Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, together with a passing allusion in the Epistle of Jude to the Agapé or love-feast of the early Church. Moreover, no New Testament writer gives us anything like a description of the outward course of the Supper as it was familiar to himself. The idea of doing so, we must remember, would never occur to these writers, since those for whom they wrote knew as well as they did themselves how the Lord's Supper was usually observed in the practice of the community. From the *Didaché*, however, and one or two other sub-apostolic documents, some

light falls backwards upon the preceding period. And when we piece together all the information that is derived from these various quarters, it does not seem impossible to learn, with a certain degree of probability, how the Lord's Supper was observed during the first days of the Church, and under the guidance of the apostles. One point which must be kept in view from the outset is, that our New Testament material comes to us from two entirely different sources, the Jewish-Christian world of Jerusalem and the Gentile-Christian world which was Paul's especial field of labour. These need to be carefully discriminated; for each, no doubt, had its own peculiarities, and what is true of the one does not by any means necessarily hold of the other. But the fundamental relation between the two spheres speedily becomes apparent; and the evidence from both sources is mutually complementary.

(1) Our first piece of evidence with regard to the external relations of the Supper bears upon the practice of the primitive community in Jerusalem, and is found in the last paragraph of the second chapter of Acts (vers. 41–47). It is true that Acts was written considerably later than 1 Corinthians; but in the latter we are already far removed from that original community the tradition of which is preserved for us in the early chapters of Luke's history, and have made besides the great transition from Jewish to Gentile soil. And as there is good reason for maintaining, in regard to the Acts of the Apostles as well as in regard to the Third Gospel, the claim affirmed by the author of both books that his narrative rests upon the testimony of those "who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word,"[1] we cannot but regard the present passage as authentic evidence for the earliest days of Christianity, and not merely the idealised representation of a much later time. Now, in the descrip-

[1] Cf. Lecture I., p. 30 ff.

tion which Luke gives us here of the life and worship of the primitive Church in Jerusalem, we find two distinct references to what is called "the breaking of bread" (vers. 42 and 46). On every exegetical ground it seems proper to conclude that in both cases it is the same practice that is referred to.[1] But what was that practice? It is plain, at all events, according to the historian, that the Jerusalem Christians of those first days were in the habit of meeting daily and taking food together. But the phrase "the breaking of bread," as employed to describe a practice of those early Christians in their gatherings, can hardly be limited to an ordinary social meal. It seems impossible not to interpret it in the light of later usage, and of the usage especially of Paul, Luke's teacher and friend. It is true that the story of the earliest days of the Church came to Luke from the primitive apostolic tradition; but the language in which he clothes the facts would naturally be that of his own time and experience. The author of Acts, as Weizsäcker reminds us, had behind him Pauline language and doctrine, so that we are justified in interpreting such a phrase as "the breaking of bread," when it occurs in connection with an account of the social life and worship of the Church, in the light of the Pauline usage.[2] Now Paul is certainly in the habit of employing this expression to designate the sacred rite of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. x. 16, xi. 24; cf. Acts xx. 7). And there can hardly be any doubt that, by the time when the book of Acts was written, it was regularly used in this sense in the Christian community. On the other hand, the clause

[1] Sometimes the attempt is made to distinguish between them, and to regard the first as describing the observance of the Eucharist, and the second as designating an ordinary social meal; the ground alleged being that in the first case ἄρτος is preceded by the article, while in the second it is not. But no doctrinal significance can be attached to the presence of the article in verse 42. Its presence or absence in either case is simply a matter of grammatical construction. See Meyer and Alford, *in loco.*

[2] *Apostolic Age*, i. 52.

that is added in the latter of the two verses, "they did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart" (ver. 46), clearly implies that the breaking of bread either was itself, or was associated with, a nourishing meal (τροφῆς), and was not merely a ceremonial act.

So far the evidence of this chapter carries us, but hardly any further. It does not define the relation of the breaking of bread in its specific sacramental character to the nourishing fellowship-meal. The prevalent opinion among scholars undoubtedly is that there was a common meal of a general kind, which was followed by the specific Eucharistic acts and words. But there are some recent investigators, as we shall see presently, who hold very strongly that no distinction can be made at this stage, or for long after, between the common meal and the Eucharist, but that the common meal itself was the Supper of the Lord. This point, accordingly, must be held over until we see whether our remaining evidence affords more materials for a decision. In the meantime it has to be observed that in the primitive Jerusalem Church, and apparently from the very first, the brethren met day by day to partake together of a common meal, and that in connection with that meal, or in the course of it, or by means of the meal itself, they celebrated the memorial rite which they had received from their Master.

Now, when we recall the fact that, as instituted by Jesus, the Lord's Supper sprang out of an immediately preceding paschal meal, it is certainly a striking transition that meets us here. In the one case we have the Lord's Supper standing in the closest connection with an annual feast of the Jews, and in the other we find it associated or identified with an ordinary social meal which takes place every day. There are those who maintain that the gulf between these two situations is altogether impassable, and that the fact that in the early community the Lord's

Supper was a thing of daily observance proves conclusively that it cannot in the first case have had any connection whatever with the Jewish Passover meal, since this would have led not to a daily observance but only to an annual repetition of the sacrament.[1] But we have seen already in a previous lecture that there are solid and sufficient grounds for holding that the Last Supper of Jesus was a paschal supper, and these grounds are not destroyed by this particular objection. It is true that at first we are apt to be struck with the sense of a sudden transition, as we pass from a Supper instituted on the occasion of the annual Passover to a Supper that is bound up with a daily common meal. But when we come to think of it, we perceive that the transition is not unmediated, and is neither unnatural nor surprising. For while the original Lord's Supper took place on the occasion of a paschal meal, the characteristic thing about it was that it was the symbolic rite of the new covenant in Christ's blood. As it broke away entirely, alike in its form, its content, and its purpose, from the covenant-meal of the old dispensation out of which it sprang, the disciples may very well have felt, as they recalled their Lord's injunction and considered how they were to give effect to it, that the Christian Supper might differ from the Jewish one in regard also to the frequency of its celebration. Besides, we must bear in mind the enthusiastic belief, which was universal among the Christians of the first days, that the Lord would very speedily return. Memorial feasts taking place only once a year would have been events too rare to meet the religious mood of a community which looked day by day for the appearing of the Lord. The great hope by which those men and women were inspired would assuredly call

[1] So Spitta (*Urchristentum*, p. 265), who has been followed by Haupt in his brochure, *Ueber die ursprüngliche Form u. Bedeutung der Abendmahlsworte*.

for a frequent observance of the sacramental feast of faith and love and expectation.

But in order to explain fully the daily observance at the first of the memorial breaking of bread, we must inquire into the origin of those common meals with which the Eucharist was so closely identified in the practice of the Church of Jerusalem. On this subject a great wealth of archæological learning has been expended, mainly with the view of establishing a direct connection between these social meals of the first Jewish Christians and the religious meals that prevailed generally among the Jews. Much information has been gathered with respect to the common meals of the Therapeutæ and the Essenes, of the Pharisees and Sadducees; and it has been pointed out that the general type of all the religious meals of Judaism was furnished by the Passover meal itself, so that there was a special point of attachment between the Jewish religious meals and that Christian meal which was originally instituted on the occasion of a paschal supper.[1] Others, again, have sought to show that within the circle of ideas of an ordinary Jewish family meal a sufficient form was already prepared for the observance of the Christian Supper.[2] But, after all, inquiries of this sort do no more than give us a suitable background for the emergence of the social meals of the Early Jerusalem Church; they do not serve in the least to account for their origin. Or, to change the figure, they provide the soil out of which the common meals of Christianity sprang, but do not bring to light the living impulses that brought the latter into being. To arrive at these, we do not really need to go any further than the sphere of experience of Christianity itself in those

[1] Cf. Lobstein, *La doctrine de la Sainte Cène*, p. 88; Holtzmann, *N.T. Theologie*, i. 385; J. F. Keating, *The Agapé and the Eucharist*, p. 24 ff.

[2] See Canon Foxley, *Contemporary Review*, Feb. 1889, p. 181; Rev. G. H. Box, *Journal of Theological Studies*, April 1902; Professor Vernon Bartlet, *The Apostolic Age*, p. 465 f.

earliest days. For when we search within this sphere, such facts as the following immediately suggest themselves:—

(1) The nucleus of the primitive Church lay in the original apostolic band; and the apostles had been accustomed, throughout all the time of their association with Jesus in His public ministry, to a table-fellowship with one another as well as with their Lord. What was more natural than that, when their Christian faith and hope revived and they became sure that their Master, though now unseen, was with them still, they should continue to eat and drink together in His presence, as they had so long been accustomed to do?

(2) But this close fellowship, which had been begotten by the daily habits of the past, was now an influence that stretched far beyond the original apostolic circle, and bound all Christians together in the consciousness of a common brotherhood. We read of the early believers, in those days when the tide of Christian faith and love and enthusiasm swelled so high, that they constantly met together, and were all of one heart and soul (Acts i. 14, ii. 1, 44, iv. 32). This being so, it was the most natural thing in the world that their sense of brotherhood and their daily fellowship should take expression in the shape of a daily common meal of the type familiar to them as Jews.

(3) Further still, we must remember one special form which was assumed by the *κοινωνία*, or communion, of those days of the Christian dawn. The disciples, we are told, "had all things common" (Acts ii. 44, iv. 32). It is not necessary to discuss in all its bearings the subject of the community of goods; but it is evident that in the first days of the Jerusalem Church the fellowship of the disciples manifested itself in the bearing by the richer members of the community of the burdens that pressed upon the poorer.[1] "They sold their possessions and goods, and

[1] Cf. Hort, *Christian Ecclesia*. p. 44.

parted them to all, according as any man had need" (Acts ii. 45). And one particular way in which this very practical κοινωνία took expression was a daily common meal, at which the wants of those who lacked were supplied by the liberality of those who had abundance (cf. Acts vi. 1).

The origin, then, of the common meals of the Jerusalem community is sufficiently explained by the prevailing spirit of communion, which rendered such meals desirable, and the circumstances of many of the members, which made them a practical necessity; while the religious meals of the Jewish world, with the Passover meal as their normative type, suggested the form which the Christian meals would naturally take. But when the Church thus assembled to express its religious fellowship by participation in a common meal at which rich and poor met together as brethren in the Lord, it was inevitable that thoughts of the Last Supper and of the Eucharistic acts and words of Jesus should be recalled to the minds of the apostles. It was at a common meal, not dissimilar in type, that their Master had taken and distributed the bread and wine, saying, "This do in remembrance of Me." And while He had not specified the occasions on which this feast of remembrance was to be observed, these fellowship-meals, which had sprung up in response to the spiritual and social needs of the new Christian brotherhood, could not but suggest themselves as suitable opportunities for the fulfilment of the Lord's command.

Reference has been made in previous lectures to the theory, strongly held by some recent writers, that the observance of the Lord's Supper in the Christian Church did not originate from any command of Jesus, but purely from the urgencies of Christian faith and desire. We have seen already how inconsistent this theory is, both with the New Testament narratives of the Supper and the facts of

primitive Church history. But the theory has a side of truth, in so far as it helps to explain the origin of the common meals of the primitive Church, which in turn became the occasions for the observance of the Lord's institution. There can be little doubt that a spontaneous sense of need gave rise at the very beginning to the common meals in which the brotherly communion of the first disciples found expression. But it certainly does not follow that we can account for the observance of the special memorial rite merely by that same sense of need. The evidence, as we have seen, points quite in the opposite direction, and shows that the explanation of the latter must be sought in the positive institution of Christ Himself. On the other hand, the common meals, which sprang out of the spontaneous impulses of Christian fellowship, provided what was felt at once to be the fitting occasions for the observance of the appointed rite; and so, while they do not account for the origin of the Lord's Supper, they may be held to explain the outward form and setting of it in the primitive Church, and also the frequency of its observance at the first. Hence they serve to mediate the transition from a Lord's Supper instituted in connection with an annual Passover feast, to a Lord's Supper observed every day in connection with a common meal of brotherly love.

Another point that appears to be brought out by the narrative in the second chapter of Acts is, that the "breaking of bread" in Jerusalem during the first days of the Church was thoroughly domestic in its character. It does not matter very much whether we translate *κατ' οἶκον* (ver. 46), "from house to house," with the Authorised Version, or "at home," with the Revised, though the weight of scholarly opinion certainly inclines to the latter rendering. But, at all events, it is plain that while the bread-breaking was a social and churchly and not a mere

family act, it took place in private houses, and so shared to some extent in the character of a Jewish family meal. The Christians in Jerusalem, now more than three thousand in number, had no place in which they could all meet together to partake of a meal in common; and until some kind of organisation of the daily ministration had been worked out, such as meets us by and by (Acts vi. 1–4), it would appear that private houses were thrown open—the rich no doubt inviting the poor, and the residents in Jerusalem those who were strangers within the gates, as many of the first Christians were (Acts ii. 8–11, 41, 42); while each house-father, in all likelihood, presided at his own table during the meal, and himself distributed the bread and wine which were eaten and drunk in remembrance of Jesus and in renewed acceptance of His grace.

(2) But now let us pass from Luke's account of the observance of the Supper in the earliest days of the Church to our next important piece of evidence—the evidence, namely, of Paul, as to the Eucharistic practice of the Church in Corinth. In doing so we must bear in mind that we are making a great leap—a leap in time of a quarter of a century, a leap from a sphere that is purely Jewish-Christian to one that is essentially Hellenic, a leap from a Church under the immediate guidance of the original apostles to one founded and instructed by the great apostle of the Gentiles. In regard to the precise relation between the Lord's Supper and the common meal, the historian of Acts, as we have seen, does not offer us any explanation. And a similar observation has to be made when we come to Paul. He is not concerned with the ordinary course of procedure at the meetings for the observance of the Lord's Supper, but only with certain deplorable abuses that have sprung up in Corinth in connection with these meetings. What is certain, however, is

that in Corinth, as in Jerusalem, the celebration of the Eucharist cannot be dissociated from participation in a common meal. Whether the common meal was itself the Lord's Supper, or only a preliminary to it, is a matter that has yet to be discussed; but of the general fact that the occasion of the sacred rite was also the occasion of a common meal there is absolutely no doubt.

Regarding the origin of the common meals of the Corinthian Church and of the Greek Churches generally, students of classical archæology have as much to tell us as Jewish archæologists have with regard to the common meals of the Church of Jerusalem. And they have made it plain that the social and religious customs of the Græco-Roman world of that time would prepare the way for a very easy naturalisation of the common meals of the Church on the soil of Gentile Christianity. In almost every part of the Roman Empire the influence of all kinds of clubs and associations, but especially of religious associations, was exceedingly great, and at the meetings of these societies common meals formed a regular part of the proceedings.[1] But while the existing customs of the Gentile world furnished a prepared soil for the implanting of the Christian common meal among communities of Gentile converts, we are not to suppose that such a meal, in the case of the Pauline Churches, was the merely spontaneous result of familiarity on the part of those converts with the club-suppers of Greek religious societies. There does not seem any reason to doubt that the common meals of the Corinthian Christians had been introduced into the Corinthian Church by Paul himself. The Lord's Supper, as he had received it from the circle of the Jerusalem apostles, was associated with a social meal, and in delivering the

[1] See Hatch, *Organisation of the Early Christian Churches*, p. 26 ff.; W. M. Ramsay, *Expositor*, 6th Series, ii. 432 ff.; Ziebarth, *Das griechische Vereinswesen*, *passim*.

tradition of the institution to others he would doubtless deliver this piece of the praxis as well. The society meals of the Greek world, accordingly, do not explain to us the love-feasts of the Greek-Christian Church. They only explain how naturally and easily common meals would be introduced as part of the usage of a Greek-Christian community, while at the same time they enable us to understand how quickly, in the absence of strong guidance, abuses might spring up at those social gatherings, in the case of a Church composed of people but recently drawn from the bosom of the heathen world, who had been accustomed to the hilarity and absence of restraint that were characteristic of the Greeks of that time in all their social meetings. For at this point we must not fail to distinguish between the different atmospheres of a Greek and a Jewish religious meal respectively. At such a meal a Jew never forgot the high ethical and religious purpose of the association in connection with which the meal was observed; but with pagans, on the contrary, the occasion was far more one for mere feasting and merriment and self-indulgence. The difficulties which Paul had to encounter in Corinth in connection with the observance of the Lord's Supper are explained to us in this way.[1]

But we must now face directly the question of the relation of the common meal which we thus find existing, alike in the Church at Jerusalem and the Church at Corinth, to the institutional meal of Jesus Christ. The ordinary opinion of scholars who have given attention to the subject is that the common meal, which by and by came to be known as the Agapé,[2] was a meal at which

[1] Cf. Schultzen, *Das Abendmahl im N. T.*, pp. 62, 106 f.

[2] The name Agapé or love-feast, as applied to the common meal of the Christian Church, though of constant use from the second century onwards, is not found in the New Testament except in Jude 12, and, according to a very doubtful reading, in 2 Peter ii. 13.

not only bread and wine, but all kinds of viands, were used ; each guest, among the Greek Christians at all events, bringing a contribution to it according to his ability. This common meal, however, while it was a real meal for the satisfaction of hunger and thirst, was inspired all through with a distinctly religious purpose, that purpose being at once to express and to quicken the sense of brotherhood among Christian believers. Then, at the end of the feast, and as its culminating point, bread and wine were taken according to the Lord's command, and, after thanksgiving to God, were eaten and drunk in remembrance of Christ, and as a special means of communion with the Lord Himself, and through Him with one another.[1] In opposition to this prevalent view, it has been strongly urged of recent years by some distinguished critical scholars, that in the apostolic age the Lord's Supper was not distinguished from the Agapé or common meal, but that the common meal was itself the Lord's Supper which was held in memory of Jesus. "Paul," we are told, "knows nothing of an Agapé and of a Eucharist following it, but of a single community-feast, which from beginning to end was a *κυριακὸν δεῖπνον*, or at least ought to have been." [2]

Sometimes the attempt is made to gain a decision on this subject from the passage in the eleventh of 1 Corinthians, in which Paul says, "When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper ; for in your eating one taketh before other his own supper, and one is hungry and another is drunken" (vers. 20, 21). But the matter cannot be settled either by endeavouring to make out an antithesis between *κυριακὸν*

[1] See Weizsäcker, *Apostolic Age*, ii. 283 ff. ; Zahn, article "Agapen" in Hauck-Herzog, *Realencyklopädie*, vol. i., and *Brod u. Wein*, p. 20 ; Harnack, *Brod u. Wasser*, in *Texte u. Untersuchungen*, vii. Band, Heft 2, p. 140 ; cf. p. 119, note 2.

[2] Jülicher, *op. cit.*, p. 232. Cf. Spitta, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

δεῖπνον and ἴδιον δεῖπνον, or by seeking to prove that the two phrases refer to the very same meal. Grammatically this point is debatable; and, what is still more important, the sense in which Paul uses the name κυριακὸν δεῖπνον is itself doubtful. It is quite possible that this designation, as also the corresponding τράπεζα Κυρίου, or Lord's Table, which we find in the preceding chapter (x. 21), was applied by him to the whole of the proceedings in connection with the common meal, just as we ourselves speak of the "Last Supper" in such a way as to include both the last Passover meal of Jesus and the special Christian rite which He grafted upon it. But if, as seems not unlikely, Paul did employ the expression κυριακὸν δεῖπνον in the wider sense, it does not follow that he failed to distinguish the common meal from the Eucharist proper, or from the Lord's Supper in the sense in which we are accustomed to employ the term. Rather, we might surmise, it was precisely because the special rite was the culminating point and crown of the whole proceedings at the table that those proceedings became consecrated to the Lord from beginning to end, so that the name κυριακὸν δεῖπνον could be fitly applied to the whole.

But if we cannot decide in this direct way whether Paul, in what he says about the observance of the Lord's Supper in Corinth, implies any distinction between the common meal and the memorial rite, it is to be noticed that both in this chapter and the preceding one he certainly implies that the memorial Supper of Jesus, as instituted on the night of the betrayal and celebrated in the Christian community, consisted simply of bread and wine. He makes this plain not only in his narrative of the institution (1 Cor. xi. 23–28), which he claims to have delivered just as he had received it, but in what he says in the tenth chapter as to the cup of blessing being a communion of the blood of Christ, and the broken bread

a communion of the body of Christ (1 Cor. x. 16). Hence it would follow that if there was absolutely no distinction between the Eucharist and the common meal, the common meal itself must have consisted of nothing but bread and wine; an idea which would be contrary to what we know of common meals among both Jews and Greeks, and out of keeping also with Paul's description of a feast at which so much eagerness and greed were displayed, and displayed, be it observed, not by the poor members of the Church, but by those who were well-to-do and presumably well fed (1 Cor. xi. 21, 22). For it can hardly be supposed that the richer members of the community would have hastened to consume their own supper, and would have left their poorer brethren hungering, if the food on the table had consisted of bread alone. Consequently, even Jülicher, who is the most strenuous advocate of the theory that in Corinth there was no distinction between the Agapé and the Eucharist, has so far to modify his conception as to say that at this meal of the community, which was made up of all kinds of viands, whenever bread and wine were passed round, as would happen repeatedly in the course of the meal, these two elements in particular would be received as the body and blood of the Lord, with words of remembrance of His death.[1] But this is really an acceptance, so far, of the view he is endeavouring to combat; for while he does not allow that the proceedings at the table were separated into the distinct acts of Agapé and Eucharist, he assumes, at least, a discrimination of the species of bread and wine from the remaining elements of the meal, and a receiving of them, and them alone, as the body and blood of Christ, and in remembrance of His death.[2]

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 233.

[2] Jülicher argues that because Paul says, "What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?" (1 Cor. xi. 22), and again, "If any man hunger, let him eat at home" (ver. 34), he is therefore altogether forbidding hearty eating and drinking

In further support of the view that in the time of Paul, and in the apostolic age generally, the Lord's Supper was the culminating point of an actual meal, we may cite Paul's usè of the phrase "after supper" (*μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι*) in his account of the order of procedure at the original Supper in the upper room. It does not seem likely that the apostle would have employed this phrase for historical reasons only, and apart from its bearing upon the ordinary practice of the community when the sacrament was being observed.[1] Rather, it serves indirectly to testify that, as the historical Supper of Jesus sprang out of a preceding social meal, so also was it with the repetition of that Supper in all the Churches of the saints.[2] It may be added, although this is to anticipate a line of evidence which carries us beyond the limits of the New Testament, that unless the Lord's Supper in the apostolic age was preceded by and discriminated from the common meal, it is difficult to explain how out of the common meal itself there subsequently arose a meal of a quite special character. It is certainty much more easy to account in a natural manner for the later entire separation of the Eucharist from the Agapé, if the two were originally distinguished, than if we suppose that all through the

at the common meals of the Church, and is thus showing that the common meal was really the sacred meal, or Lord's Supper. But it is entirely a mistake to say that Paul censures hearty eating and drinking at the social meal. On the contrary, he considers it a scandalous thing that one should be left hungry, no less than that another should become drunken (ver. 21), and he expressly says, "When ye come together to eat, tarry one for another" (ver. 33); which surely implies a meal for the hearty satisfaction of hunger and thirst. It is selfishness and greed only that he objects to. And his meaning in the last verse of the chapter must therefore be, that if any one is so hungry that he cannot behave with the propriety which befits the social meals of the community, that man should relieve his hunger at home (ver. 34).

[1] Cf. Schmiedel, *Hand-Commentar*, 1 *Kor.*, p. 161.

[2] The *μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι*, introducing the second part only of the sacramental Supper, would further indicate that in the celebrations of the community, as in the original institution, the bread was broken and passed round before the common meal was ended, while the cup of communion was reserved until the completion of the common meal.

first century, and even later, the Agapé and the Eucharist were one and the same.[1]

(3) Passing now from Paul's evidence as to the external relations of the Lord's Supper in the Church at Corinth, we have in one of the "we" sections of Acts what may be taken as Luke's personal testimony to the manner in which the apostle of the Gentiles observed the "breaking of bread" in a Church of his own founding (cf. 2 Cor. ii. 12) in the Gentile city of Alexandria Troas, and within a year or two after he had written his First Epistle to the Corinthians (Acts xx. 7–11). When we are told that it was upon the first day of the week that the disciples came together to break bread (ver. 7), there can be little doubt that the reference is to the observance of the Lord's Supper. For here we have not only that phrase "to break bread," around which when Luke wrote a sacramental meaning had gathered, but a bread-breaking which was the specific purpose for which the Christians of Troas came together, and came together moreover upon the first day of the week. And when we find that this breaking of bread is further (ver. 11) connected with, and yet discriminated from, an eating of food (γευσάμενος), it is natural to conclude that in Troas, as in Corinth, the Lord's Supper formed a part of a common meal.[2] Sometimes, from the

[1] Cf. Schultzen: "Wenn Jülicher meint, dass man sich zuerst das Abschiedswort des Herrn bei jedem gemeinsamen Mahle vergegenwärtigt habe, so bleibt unerklärlich, wie daraus ein Mahl mit besonderem Charakter entstanden ist" (*Das Abendmahl im N. T.*, p. 93).

[2] With regard to the use of the expression "to break bread" in Luke xxiv. 30, 35, and Acts xxvii. 35, there is no sufficient ground for concluding, as is sometimes done, that in these cases we must think of an observance of the Eucharist. It is true that the phrase had become technical, but its technical application only follows when that is plainly involved in the connections in which we find it. With ourselves the words "Supper" and "Communion" are technical, from the Christian point of view, but still form part of the vocabulary of common life. There is no reason, therefore, for holding that the supper at Emmaus was an observance of the ordinance which Jesus had appointed in the upper room. The two disciples were not apostles, and had not been present at the institution of the memorial rite; and so the Lord's breaking of bread would

fact that in the present narrative Paul's eating of food is placed after his breaking of bread (ver. 11), the conclusion is drawn that we have here an inversion of the arrangement we found existing in Corinth, and an observance of the Lord's Supper before instead of after the common meal. And on this inference the supposition has next been erected that the abuses in Corinth had led the apostle in the interval to change the previous order of procedure, and deliberately to set the memorial rite before the meal of social fellowship. In this way Paul is transformed into an advocate of the principle of "fasting Communion"! But the order of the two expressions "breaking bread" and "eating," in a single verse of this narrative, is much too slender a foundation for such a superstructure, especially as there is nothing else, either in the New Testament or in the sub-apostolic literature, to justify the notion that any transposition of this kind had now been made. The relation of the two phrases is probably quite casual, and is easily explained, in any case, by the circumstance that the common meal and the Lord's Supper, while perfectly distinct in idea, were so intimately associated in point of fact.

There is no ground, therefore, for supposing that the narrative of the Communion at Troas in which Paul took part points to a change from the order of things that met us at Corinth. But it brings to light certain features in the celebration of the sacrament in a Pauline Church which the Corinthian Epistle left in obscurity.

(*a*) One thing we notice is, that the bread-breaking at

recall to them, not the specific actions of the Last Supper, which they had not seen, and quite possibly had not as yet even heard of, but other occasions when they had watched the Master distributing food with thanksgiving (cf. Mark vi. 41, viii. 6, 19). As for the meal on board of the doomed ship at Melita, it appears quite out of the question to turn it into an observance of the Lord's Supper. It was for the whole ship's company—soldiers, sailors, and passengers, nearly all of whom were heathen. Paul's thanksgiving before he broke the bread was an ordinary act of piety, common alike to Jews and Christians before participation in any meal.

Troas took place on the first day of the week. Now the evidence of the New Testament, supported by that of the sub-apostolic writers, leads to the conclusion that at a very early period the first day of the week came to be regarded by the Church as specifically "the Lord's Day," and the proper day of Christian worship.[1] And Luke's language in the present case certainly suggests that the first day of the week was the regular day for the breaking of bread with its accompanying common meal. Here, then, we have a hint as to the frequency with which at this time the Lord's Supper was celebrated, at least in a Gentile Church. In Jerusalem at the first, as we have seen, the observance took place every day. But that daily observance was connected with the peculiar circumstances and the Messianic expectations of the primitive community, and especially it was occasioned by the daily common meal, which again, in part at least, was one of the fruits of having "all things common." But the species of modified Communism that prevailed in the primitive society at Jerusalem seems to have gradually died away; and the daily meal, which served as an opportunity for the daily celebration of the Eucharist, probably died along with it. In the Churches founded by Paul there is not the slightest trace of anything like a community of goods. In 1 Corinthians we read of a common meal in connection with which the memorial rite was observed, but nothing is said as to the frequency with which these social meetings of the Church were held. But in the same Epistle we find Paul speaking of the first day of the week as the day when Christians are to lay before God their offerings for the poor of the Church; and this would point to it as a day of special sanctity and worship. And conformably with this, Luke tells us in the present passage that in Troas the first day of the

[1] See 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10. Cf. *Didaché*, xiv. 1; *Barnab. Ep.*, xv. 9; Ignatius, *ad Magnes*, ix.; Justin, *Apol.*, i. 67.

week was the day when the disciples came together for the breaking of bread. The probability is that, as the Eucharist was never observed in the apostolic age apart from a social meal, and as daily common meals soon proved to be impracticable for the great majority of Christians, the Lord's Day had come to be generally recognised as the proper day for the regular observance of the Lord's Supper, an arrangement which certainly prevailed later, as we learn from the evidence of the *Didaché* and Justin's *Apology*, and probably also from Pliny's letter to Trajan.[1]

(*b*) Another feature of the bread-breaking at Troas is that the observance of the Supper was preceded by the preaching of the word. There is no evidence of this at Corinth. Rather, a comparison of chapters xi. and xiv. of 1 Corinthians would suggest that Paul distinguishes the meeting for the common meal and the Eucharist on the one hand, from that for edification through gifts of prophecy on the other. But even at the Eucharistic gatherings preaching may have been customary, although it would hold a subordinate place, and be regarded only as an accessory to the main purpose for which the Church was assembled; and Paul, at all events, appears to have made use of it at Troas. It is possible that the abuses which had sprung up at Corinth had revealed to him the danger, especially in a Greek community, of a social meal, even though its ultimate purpose was of the most sacred nature, unless that purpose was very strongly impressed upon the minds of the participants. We cannot say that it was always his habit to preach when the Lord's Supper was about to be celebrated, for the circumstances in this case were exceptional, since he was to leave Troas on the next morning, and this was his last opportunity of addressing his converts in that place. But his action here does suggest his sense of the need of maintaining a close connection

[1] *Didaché*, xvi. 1; Justin, *Apology*, i. 67. Pliny's phrase is "*stato die*."

between the word and the sacrament, and of guarding the outward rite from the tendency to degeneration that speedily besets it when it is not thrilled through and through with the spiritual powers of the gospel of Christ.

(*c*) We notice further, that this Lord's Supper at Troas was held in the evening; for there were many lights in the upper chamber where they were gathered together (ver. 8), and Paul prolonged his discourse until midnight (ver. 7). It was natural that the evening hour should be chosen, since it was at an evening meal that Jesus had instituted the Communion Supper; and the primitive Church doubtless clung throughout as closely as possible to the original pattern of the observance. But we must remember, besides, that for the great majority of Gentile Christians, who were not only working people and in many cases slaves, but who lived in a time when the Lord's day was not a day of rest but one of general labour indistinguishable from any other, the evening, when the day's toils were ended, was the only opportunity they would have for meeting together at a common table. A brief meeting in the morning before dawn may have been possible, like that described by Pliny at which the Christians sang a hymn of praise to Christ as to God; but the meeting for the social meal and the accompanying Eucharist was almost necessarily at night.

(4) The only other piece of New Testament evidence bearing on the outward connections of the Lord's Supper is a verse in the Book of Jude, in which the writer speaks of unworthy members of the Church who are "hidden rocks in your love-feasts (*ἀγάπαις*), feasting themselves without fear, pasturing their own selves" (ver. 12).[1] It is true

[1] The reading *ἀγάπαις* (love-feasts) which has been adopted by the Revisers in 2 Pet. ii. 13, in place of the *ἀπάταις* (deceits) of the Textus Receptus, is more than doubtful. The weight of MSS., and the preponderance of modern critical opinion, appear to be against it. If we accept it, it would furnish a second example within the N.T. Canon of the application of the name Agapé to the Christian common meals.

that the word ἀγάπη is not associated here with any phrase, such as "the breaking of bread," which would entitle us to say with certainty that the writer is referring to a common meal at which the Eucharist was celebrated. But as the word afterwards came to be employed as a technical name for the religious common meals of the Church, and is so used by Ignatius early in the second century,[1] there is every reason to believe that Jude is referring here to those social meals of the community, preceding the Eucharist, of which Luke tells us in Acts, and Paul in 1 Corinthians, and which now for the first time in the New Testament are described by the name Agapé which afterwards became so familiar. Jude's language in this verse appears to show that the abuses which Paul censured with such severity at Corinth were not confined to the Church of that city, or to the time when Paul wrote his Epistle, but were apt to make their appearance wherever a church had grown up amidst pagan surroundings and associations.[2] Here, accordingly, we encounter the same kind of heartless selfishness as Paul rebuked; here are men who come to the love-feast of Christ's community only to feast themselves without fear, men who "pasture their own selves" without any regard to the needs or feelings of their brethren.

So far, then, as the outward relations of the Lord's Supper can be traced from the New Testament literature, the state of matters appears to have been as follows. In Jerusalem, in the earliest days of the Church, there were daily common meals, which were meant, indeed, for the satisfaction of hunger and thirst, but also and expressly for

[1] *Ad Smyrn.*, viii.

[2] There is much to be said for the view that this Epistle, while intended for wider circulation, was specially addressed to the Church at Antioch, which would be exposed to dangers from heathen influences similar to those which affected the Church at Corinth. Cf. Beyschlag, *N. T. Theology*, ii. 491; Chase, *Dict. of the Bible*, ii. 805.

the realisation of Christian fellowship (*κοινωνία*); and in connection with these, and as their culminating point, there took place the Eucharistic "breaking of bread" in remembrance of Jesus and in obedience to His word. When we pass to the Gentile world, as represented by the Churches of Corinth and Troas, we find common meals in existence there also in connection with the observance of the Lord's Supper; but there is a tendency in Corinth, in the absence of Paul's firm guidance, to allow the common meal to degenerate to the level of those pagan feasts with which Greek converts had previously been familiar. In Jude, for the first time, we find the Christian common meal described by the name Agapé, which from the time of Ignatius onwards is its usual designation.

2. The New Testament evidence as to the outward connections of the Lord's Supper is somewhat scanty; but the conclusions to which we have come are confirmed by some rays of light that are reflected upon this evidence from the early extra-canonical literature. The *Didaché*, dating from the end of the first century or the beginning of the second, appears to testify expressly to a combination of the Eucharist with an actual meal, when it enjoins that the second Eucharistic prayer is to be offered "after being filled" (*μετὰ δὲ τὸ ἐμπλησθῆναι*);[1] an expression which seems to imply that a regular meal had previously been partaken of for the satisfaction of hunger and thirst.[2] In the Ignatian Epistles, similarly,[3] the Lord's Supper and

[1] *Didaché*, x. 1.

[2] In the later Apostolic Constitutions, *μετὰ δὲ τὸ ἐμπλησθῆναι* is, significantly, changed into *μετὰ δὲ τὴν μετάληψιν* (bk. vii. chap. xxvi.), *i.e.* "after participation in the sacrament." The meaning of *ἐμπλησθῆναι*, however, can hardly be doubted, or spiritualised into meaning "after being spiritually fed," as is done by Dr. Bigg (in his *Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles*, p. 63). It is the same word which is used in John vi. 12 to express the "filling" of the multitude through the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. Cf. Harnack, *Lehre der Zwölf Apostel*, p. 31.

[3] About A.D. 110.

the love-feast are still combined,—combined, indeed, so closely that the names Eucharist and Agapé are used interchangeably.[1]

It is more difficult to decide as to the value at this point of the evidence of Pliny's celebrated letter to Trajan,[2] so interesting and suggestive as one of the occasional side-lights cast by Roman history and literature upon the origins of the Early Christian Church. Pliny informs the Emperor that those Christians whom he had examined testified that, upon a fixed day (*stato die*) they had been accustomed to hold two meetings—one before the dawn, when they sang a hymn to Christ as to a God, and bound themselves by a "*sacramentum*" to commit no kind of crime; and another at a later hour, when they assembled for the purpose of taking food of an ordinary and harmless character.[3] He adds that some of the witnesses testified that they had abandoned the later meeting in obedience to the imperial proclamation against clubs. In considering these statements several things have to be borne in mind. In the first place, Pliny himself had a very imperfect understanding of the subject of which he was writing. Further, the word *sacramentum* is of ambiguous meaning. Pliny would almost certainly take it in the Roman sense of an oath or solemn obligation; and that is the sense in which most modern scholars are inclined to interpret it. On the other hand, those who seek to make out from this letter that the celebration of the Eucharist, in Bithynia at all events, had already been dissociated from any connection with the Agapé, and had been transferred from the evening to the early morning, take it to mean a Christian sacrament in

[1] *Ad Smyrn.*, viii. 2. This does not imply, as is sometimes imagined (*e.g.*, Drews, "Eucharistie," Hauck-Herzog's *Realencyklopädie*), that Justin did not distinguish between the two. Cf. again our use of the terms "the Last Supper" and "the Lord's Supper."

[2] About A.D. 112.

[3] This with evident reference to the accusations of Θυέστεια δεῖπνα and Οἰδιποδείους μίξεις.

the later sense of the Church. Even so, however, it must be remembered that they are by no means entitled to assume that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was intended, since the allusion might more naturally be to the baptismal vow, which was frequently spoken of in the Early Church as the *sacramentum*, or military oath, of the Christian soldier.[1] Besides, it has to be remembered again that Pliny derived his information largely from those who through fear of persecution had now abandoned their connection with the Christian community. It does not follow because those apostates had given up the custom of assembling for a common meal, that the Christians of Bithynia generally, much less the Christians of the Roman Empire as a whole, had by this time discontinued the observance of the Agapé, and so had severed the old association of the Eucharist with a preceding meal of a more general nature.[2]

On the whole, it seems that little use can be made of Pliny's testimony in this particular matter, either one way or another; and it is not till we come to Justin Martyr, about the middle of the second century, that we find any clear indication of the separation of the Eucharist from the Agapé, a separation which appears to follow from the fact that, in the account he gives of the worship of the Church, he does not mention the Agapé at all, but speaks of the Eucharist as following a service which consists of the reading of Scripture, prayers, and exhortation.[3] What Justin indicates for the middle of the century Tertullian distinctly testifies towards its close. By his time, it is evident, in the Church of the West at all events, while the Agapé continued to be observed, the Eucharist was no longer associated with it.[4] And yet it is by no means

[1] Cf. Neander, *Church History* (Clark's Edition), i. 133.
[2] See Zahn, "Agapen," Hauck-Herzog's *Realencyklopädie*, i. 236.
[3] *Apology*, lxvii. [4] *De Corona Militis*, iii.

certain that the old connection of the Lord's Supper with a more general social meal did not linger on for some time longer in some parts of the Church and amongst some Christian sects. Dr. Bigg, in his *Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, maintains strongly that in the picture which Clement gives of the Church life of the end of the second century, he depicts the evening meal of a Christian household as at once an Agapé and a Eucharist, at which the house-father is also the house-priest.[1] And towards the middle of the third century, we learn from Cyprian that certain Christian sects still attached their observance of the Eucharist to participation in a common meal;[2] while Socrates in his *Ecclesiastical History* testifies to a similar usage among the Egyptian Christians of the century following.[3] But it seems safe to say that while the connection between the Lord's Supper and the common meal continued universally until the opening decades of the second century, it began soon after that to be dissolved. By Tertullian's time the severance was general, though not yet universal. And while the Agapé, after being thus separated from the Eucharist, continued for long to maintain a more or less active life of its own, it gradually passed out of existence, or was preserved only as a feast of charity for the poor.

In respect of the causes which led to the severance of the original connection between the Christian social meal and the Lord's Supper there is a lack of precise information. But doubtless various influences were at work. The effect in this direction of Trajan's enforcement of the old law against clubs has probably been overestimated by some

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 102 ff. Dr. Bigg's view is endorsed by Harnack, *History of Dogma*, ii. 143; Loofs, "Abendmahl" (Kirchenlehre), in Hauck-Herzog's *Realencyklopädie*, i. 45; and Allen, *Christian Institutions*, p. 522 ff. Cf., however, what is said on the other side by Zahn, *Realencyklopädie*, i. 234; and Keating, *Agapé and Eucharist*, p. 79 ff.

[2] *Ep.* lxiii. 16. See Zahn, *Realencyklopädie*, i. 2 5.

[3] *Op. cit.*, v. 22.

writers;[1] but it may have led for a time in certain quarters to the discontinuance of the social meals of the Church in the evening, and so to the observance of the Eucharist independently of a common meal. It seems more likely, however, that a deeper and more powerful influence was the growth of a widespread suspicion in the non-Christian popular mind that these evening meals of the Church, in which persons of all ages and both sexes took part, were the scenes of wild revelry and abominable crime. The horrible accusations of "Thyestean banquets and Œdipodean intercourse," to which these suspicions gave rise, would suggest the expediency of separating the sacrament from a meal which, after all, was not indispensable to the observance of the memorial rite itself. And even apart from the false accusations of the heathen, the actual abuses which are referred to both in 1 Corinthians and the Epistle of Jude, and which would tend to grow rather than to decrease as the Church spread out into society and attracted members from the heathen world in ever-increasing numbers, may have caused the Church leaders to feel the advisability of dissevering the sacred rite which the Lord had appointed from its old connection with the love-feast. But to explain the ultimate complete disappearance of this original union between the two, we must remember the gradual growth within the Church, through pagan and Jewish influences, of the tendency to transmute the simple rite of Jesus into the "dreadful mystery" of the later belief. That association of the Lord's Supper with a social meal, which had commended itself to the mind of Christ Himself, and from which the apostles had never dreamed of departing, began to appear nothing less than sacrilegious to men who had introduced the practice of "fasting com-

[1] For instance, by Professor W. M. Ramsay. See his *Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 358. Cf. Canon Meyrick's essay on "The History of the Lord's Supper," *Church Past and Present*, p. 183.

munion," and had entered upon the devious pathway by which at last "the Lord's Supper was transformed into the Mass of the Roman Church, or into the imposing drama of the Oriental Mystery." [1]

II. We have dealt so far with the external relations of the Lord's Supper in the apostolic age, and especially with its relation to the Agapé or common meal. It now remains to say something regarding the forms of the Supper itself.

1. The question of the *succession of the two separate acts* has been recently raised,[2] on the ground that in the tenth chapter of 1 Corinthians we find Paul saying, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ" (ver. 16). Here we have the cup placed before the bread; and this has been taken to indicate that it was Paul's custom at the Communion to pass the cup first and the bread afterwards. The idea that this was the Pauline order is supposed to receive support from the fact that in the version given in the "Western" text of Luke's narrative of the original Supper the cup appears to be set before the bread. And still further confirmation is found in the *Didaché;* for in the instructions there given for the celebration of the Holy Supper we read, "Now as regards the Eucharist, give thanks after this manner: First for the cup (here follow the thanksgivings for the cup); and for the broken bread (here follow the prayers over the bread)." [3] These arguments, however, really amount to very little, in view of the overwhelming mass of evidence to the contrary. For apart from this one passage in the *Didaché*

[1] Cf. Tertullian, "Quid secreto ante omnem cibum gustes?" *Ad Uxorem*, ii. 5. By the time of Chrysostom the ascetic idea had become so strong that we find him adopting, for evident doctrinal reasons, the impossible conclusion that at Corinth in the time of Paul the Eucharist preceded the common meal (*Hom.* 27 on 1 Cor.). See Zahn, Hauck-Herzog's *Realencyklopädie*, i. 135. Cf. Meyer, *sub* 1 Cor. xi. 20.

[2] See G. H. Box, *Journ. of Theol. Studies*, Ap. 1902, p. 362 ff.

[3] ix. 1–3.

there is not a single instance to show that it was ever the later practice of the Church to drink of the cup before eating of the bread,[1] a circumstance which would be altogether unaccountable if Paul himself, to whom especially the Churches in the Gentile world owed their existence, had taught his converts to observe the Supper after this fashion. Moreover, in judging of the apostle's reference in the tenth chapter of 1 Corinthians to the cup of thanksgiving and the broken bread, we must remember that he is not concerned at this stage with the order of the Eucharistic acts, but solely with the idea of communion. The order in which he makes mention at this point of the cup and the bread is probably explained by the parallel he is about to draw between the Christian Supper and the idol-feast, for at the latter the libation to the god stood in the foreground (cf. ver. 21). It cannot be regarded as of any significance for the observance of the Eucharist, and it is balanced, in any case, in this same chapter by his reference first to the eating of the spiritual meat, and next to the drinking of the spiritual drink (vers. 3, 4). Above all, we must remember that in Paul's full narrative of the historical Supper of Jesus, where the proper order of the acts is a matter of importance, he is perfectly explicit in representing the Lord as taking first the bread and then the cup, and is also quite emphatic in claiming to have delivered the Supper to the Corinthian Church even as he had received it,—a claim which certainly applies not merely to the delivery of an oral tradition, but to the transmission of an actual practice at the Communion Table. It is impossible, therefore, to imagine that Paul was in the habit of inverting the familiar procedure of the Supper. As for the "Western" reading of Luke's narrative, it has been indicated previously that there are very good grounds for holding that, in spite of

[1] Harnack says, "Die spätere Praxis stellt ausnahmslos das Brod voran" (*Lehre der Zwölf Apostel*, p. 28).

the support it received from Westcott and Hort, little weight should be attached to it after all. It seems much more probable that it is due to the misapprehension of a transcriber than that it expresses a belief on the part of the evangelist himself that Jesus passed the cup of the new covenant to His disciples before He gave them the broken bread. And finally, with regard to the *Didaché*, it has to be noticed that the passage which has been referred to is immediately followed by the injunction, "But let no one eat or drink of your Eucharist, except those baptized into the name of the Lord,"[1] where the actions of the Supper are set in their customary order—eating first and drinking last. This seems to show that we cannot attach much importance to the inversion of the usual arrangement in the directions as to the prayers.

2. The question of the *elements* of the Lord's Supper in the primitive Church has been brought into some prominence in the course of recent discussions. In particular, Harnack has maintained that it was a widely diffused custom to celebrate the Eucharist with bread and water instead of with bread and wine, and that Paul himself lent his sanction to such a proceeding.[2] It was Harnack's striking brochure on this subject in 1891 that really originated the modern critical discussion of the Lord's Supper which has gone on ever since; although the controversy soon spread out over a much wider field than had been covered, or even thought of, by the original essayist. Harnack admits, of course, that there is no doubt that it was wine that Jesus used at the institution of the Supper, and wine also that was ordinarily made use of by Paul. But from the fact that the latter always speaks of the bread and the cup, and never of the bread

[1] ix. 5.

[2] *Brod u. Wasser: die eucharistischen Elemente bei Justin*, in *Texte u. Untersuchungen*, vii. Band, Heft 2.

and the wine, and from various other exegetical considerations which need not be mentioned here,[1] he argues that the apostle laid no stress upon the contents of the cup, and in particular that he expressly sanctioned the use of water in place of wine. And he further endeavours to show that at a later time the employment of water in the celebration of the Supper had become a very widely diffused practice, sometimes through the influence of ascetic motives, and sometimes perhaps through motives of economy, since poor people had not always wine at their command—a practice which prevailed not only among heretical sects but within the Catholic Church, and which by the time of Justin had become the general custom, although soon afterwards it began to decline. And the conclusion which Harnack draws from all this is that the elements of the Lord's Supper are a matter of little importance, the thing of real consequence, and the essence of the sacrament, being the acts of eating and drinking.

Harnack, it must be confessed, has not been successful in making good his case either exegetically or historically. His views regarding the prevalence among the Early Christians of the use of water as a substitute for wine at the Lord's Table have been shown to be altogether exaggerated; while his attempts to discover a sanction for the practice in the language of Paul are exceedingly fanciful and far-fetched.[2] The New Testament gives us no ground to suppose that Paul deviated in this matter from the

[1] He cites the comparison of the spiritual drink with the water from the rock which was drunk by the Israelites (1 Cor. x. 4), and further insists that when Paul says, "It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine," it is a mere evasion for us to make an exception in the case of the wine of the Supper." *Op. cit.*, p. 137.

[2] Among the many criticisms of Harnack's work, see especially those of Zahn in his *Brod u. Wein;* Jülicher in his essay, already frequently referred to, "Zur Geschichte der Abendmahlsfeier in der ältesten Kirche," in *Theologische Abhandlungen;* and Grafe in his article, "Die neuesten Forschungen über die urchristliche Abendmahlsfeier," in *Zeitschrift für Theologie u. Kirche*, Jahrgang v. Heft 2.

example set by Jesus. Still, there were undoubtedly many Christians in the second century who were in the habit of celebrating the sacrament with water in place of wine; and it may not be wrong to infer that they did so, if not with any express apostolic sanction, at least in the true spirit of apostolic freedom. If Harnack's data are not altogether right, he is not far wrong in his conclusion that it is the acts of eating and drinking, and not the material elements of bread and wine in themselves, on which the real stress is laid in the New Testament. It is always proper for us to follow the great original precedent as closely as possible. Luther was surely right when he laid down the general principle that our observance of the Lord's Supper is the more Christian the nearer it comes and the liker it is to the Supper in the upper room. But none the less, the words of Jesus and the teaching of Paul alike point to the conclusion that it is the eating and drinking in remembrance of Jesus, and not the material substances of bread and wine, that are of the deepest consequence in the celebration of the Supper. If poor, persecuted Christians in the early days of the Church found themselves without wine wherewith to keep their Communion feast, we cannot doubt that they held a true Lord's Supper although it was celebrated only with bread and water. Similarly, we cannot doubt that Christian missionaries and their converts in the South Sea Islands, who had no wine and no means of getting any, were justified in using the milk of the cocoa-nut, their familiar beverage, as a suitable substitute.

3. As to a *fixed formula* for the observance of the Lord's Supper, it seems perfectly evident that in the apostolic age there was no such thing, and no idea that such a thing was necessary in order to the due celebration of the rite or the securing of its validity. We have seen that the variations in the four accounts of the institution are not of a kind that imply any real divergence of thought

as to its meaning and purpose; but they show conclusively enough that no mysterious power of converting the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ was supposed to inhere in the employment of a set formula of distribution.[1] Nor is there any sign that such a miraculous efficacy was ascribed to the prayer of thanksgiving by which the distribution was preceded. Those who maintain that there is a real objective difference between the unconsecrated and the consecrated elements, necessarily attach immense importance to the question of the moment and the instrument of consecration.[2] But they are always met by the difficulty of showing any ground in the New Testament for deciding what the instrument of consecration is, and when precisely consecration takes place. Bishop Gore speaks about the "normal form of consecration" and "the words which in the West have come to be recognised as the instrument of consecration."[3] But language such as this only serves to remind us that the New Testament says absolutely nothing about any form or instrument of consecration whatsoever. We may speak if we please of the form which is "normal," or which "in the West has come to be recognised"; but when we go to Christ and His apostles the very idea of any such form completely disappears. We may ask, Did Jesus consecrate the elements by His prayer of thanksgiving (a prayer, be it noted, of the form of which we are entirely ignorant)? Or did He consecrate them after the thanksgiving by the

[1] Cf. Principal Fairbairn, *Philosophy of the Christian Religion*, p. 420.

[2] See, *e.g.*, Kahnis, *Die Lehre vom Abendmahle*, p. 131.

[3] *Body of Christ*, p. 76. Cf. Alford's remark on τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλῶμεν (1 Cor. x. 16), "Probably already the breaking of the bread in the Communion was part of the act of consecration." "Probably . . . already . . . part of the act": here we have a composite act, a composite act which is only in process of formation, a composite act as to the development of which we have nothing but surmise to go upon. On the diversities of opinion among the Fathers as to whether consecration was effected by the thanksgiving, the *epiklesis* (invocation of the Holy Ghost), or the use of the words of institution, see Drews, "Eucharistie," Hauck-Herzog's *Realencyklopädie*, v. 566.

words, "This is My Body"; "This cup is the new covenant in My blood"? Or, again, Did He consecrate them without any words, by means of certain significant gestures?[1] To questions such as these there is no positive reply.[2] And when we pass to the New Testament community, as represented especially by Paul, we obtain no further light on the subject of a correct formula or consecrating instrument, no suggestion that there was any such thing as a definite consecration in the realistic sense of the words. Thanks were offered over the bread and the wine before they were used for the purposes of the Communion; but it is a mere assumption to say, as is sometimes done, that this thanksgiving must be understood as covering a prayer of invocation that, through the Spirit, the bread and wine might become the body and blood of the Lord, and further, that by means of this prayer of invocation the wonderful transformation was wrought.[3] Thanksgiving before meat was an ordinary act of piety then as now; and there is nothing to indicate that it produced miraculous effects at the Lord's Table any more than at any other meal. Not that there is any objection to speaking of a consecration of the Supper by the act of

[1] So, *e.g.*, Watterich, *Der Konsekrationsmoment im heiligen Abendmahl*, p. 8 f.

[2] Dr. Dale, in his essay on "The Doctrine of the Real Presence," enumerates no fewer than seven different answers which have been given to the question as to the form of consecration employed by our Lord, *Essays and Addresses*, p. 319 ff.

[3] It is interesting to notice that in what he regards as the normal and Catholic form of consecration, Bishop Gore includes the *epiklesis*, or invocation of the Holy Ghost, as one of the three component parts of the complete form. Indeed, he goes further, and admits that "the Church for many centuries both in East and West attributed the consecration of the elements to the action of the Holy Ghost invoked by the Church" (*op. cit.*, pp. 76, 77). It is a well-known fact that in the Communion service of Dr. Gore's own Church the ancient "invocation of the Holy Ghost" is entirely lacking; so that from a "Catholic," not to speak of a Roman, point of view, it is questionable whether the sacrament is ever validly observed in the Anglican Church at all. See some pointed remarks upon this subject by Mr. C. Anderson Scott, *Critical Review*, 1901, p. 127. Compare also the serious scruples on this point of the "Usager" party among the English Nonjurors. See Canon Overton's admirable history, *The Nonjurors*, pp, 292–303.

prayerful thanksgiving, for even an ordinary meal is consecrated by such an act. But it is the meal that is consecrated, not the provisions that lie on the table. The food and drink of our common lives do not undergo an objective change when a "grace" or thanksgiving is said over them; it is only as eaten and drunk by faithful and thankful hearts, and not in themselves, that they become sacred things. Similarly, in the Lord's Supper the elements are not consecrated in themselves, in the sense of being objectively transformed, but only as they are received by faith from the hands of Jesus as the appointed symbols of His body and blood. It is altogether incredible that if Paul had believed that the bread and wine of the Communion become the body and blood of the Lord by means of certain forms, whether of prayer or declaration, he would not have told us more precisely in his account of the Supper what the proper forms were by which so miraculous a change could be wrought—all the more because he is dealing with this very point, that the bread and wine had been eaten and drunk unworthily in Corinth, so that the Lord's body was not discerned. But of such forms the apostle has nothing to say. And the inference clearly is that the bread and wine are sacred things, not because the use of a particular instrument of consecration turns them into something which previously they were not, but because to those who receive them as from the Lord, and as appointed by Him to be the means of proffering the benefits of His great living sacrifice, the blessings of that sacrifice are actually imparted.

The absence of fixed forms, we may add, is similarly attested for the sub-apostolic age by the *Didaché*, in which permission is granted to the prophets to give thanks at the celebration of the Lord's Supper "as much as they will" (*εὐχαριστεῖν ὅσα θέλουσιν*);[1] and even by Justin, who testifies

[1] x. 7.

that the president of the gathering (ὁ προεστώς) offered prayers and thanksgivings "according to his ability" (ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ).[1]

4. One more question remains, the question of the *administrant*. On this point also the New Testament has nothing directly to tell us. Its very silence, however, like its silence with regard to an instrument of consecration, makes it difficult to suppose that a due and valid observance of the rite was held by the apostles to depend in any way upon the Church-standing of the believer who presided at the Table. And this argument from silence is fully supported by what we read in the second chapter of Acts as to the character of the meetings held by the primitive Jerusalem community for the breaking of bread. The bread-breaking, as we have seen, is represented as both a daily and a household celebration. This was at a time when there were more than three thousand Christians in Jerusalem, so that even if we take for granted, as we certainly ought to do, that those gatherings in private houses were not mere gatherings of single families, but assemblies rather of what may be called family-groups, it is impossible to imagine that one or other of the apostles was present every day in each. But as, apart from the apostles themselves, there were no special office-bearers in the Church at that time, it would naturally follow that at those household Communions the head of the house would himself preside, just as the house-father had been accustomed to do at the paschal supper or at any other Jewish family meal.

It is evident that similar household celebrations of the Supper continued into post-apostolic times. We gather from Ignatius that besides the regular meetings of a whole Christian congregation, love-feasts, with the Eucharist attached, were sometimes held by smaller groups of Chris-

[1] *Apol.* i. 67.

tian worshippers.[1] Ignatius himself opposes the practice in the interests of Christian unity, and advocates one observance by the whole Church under the presidency of the bishop or pastor.[2] But his testimony shows quite plainly that within his own time and sphere such gatherings as we read of at the first were still frequent. We have seen too that there is some reason to believe that in Alexandria household celebrations continued even till the time of Clement, and that in Egypt they lingered on for a century or two longer.

On the subject of the household celebration of the Supper Paul's writings give us no information, unless we were to infer from his use of the phrases, "the Church that is in their house" (Rom. xvi. 5; 1 Cor. xvi. 19), and "the Church in thy house" (Philem. 2), that these house-churches were entitled to perform all churchly acts. But we cannot fail to notice that in the tenth chapter of 1 Corinthians the apostle speaks of the breaking of the bread and the blessing of the cup in the first person plural —"the bread which we break," "the cup of blessing which we bless"; so that he suggests that the breaking and the blessing were the acts of the congregation and not of any particular individual. No hint is given of a ministerial, much less of a sacerdotal consecration of the elements; and the probability is that at this time any member of a company of communicating believers might officiate on behalf of the rest.[3] In like manner, when Paul is dealing in the eleventh chapter with the disorders that had disgraced the celebration of the Supper at Corinth, he makes no reference or appeal to any presiding minister, although, if there had been one, it would have been natural to hold him specially responsible for the maintenance of decorum, and specially

[1] *Philadelph.* 4, *Ephes.* 20.
[2] Cf. Principal Rainy, *The Ancient Catholic Church*, p. 76.
[3] See Meyer, *Corinthians*, i. 295.

blameworthy when decency and order, not to speak of Christian charity, were altogether disregarded in the sacred assemblies of the Church. On the contrary, he addresses himself to the members of the Church generally, and holds them all alike responsible for the proper observance of the holy feast. And when we come to the Pastoral Epistles, in which the duties of elders or bishops are pretty fully set forth, there is nothing to indicate that the administration of the Lord's Supper formed a special and peculiar part of their work, nor is any word upon this subject addressed even to Timothy himself. The prescriptions of the *Didaché*, it may be added, are entirely in line at this point with what we find in the Pauline Epistles. The injunctions with regard to the observance of the Eucharist are in the second person plural, and are apparently addressed to the Church as a whole. There is no sign of the existence of a special priesthood by whom the sacrament must necessarily be administered. Rather, the liberty given to the prophets to give thanks at the Communion Table "as much as they will," points to the absence of any unvarying rule with regard to the administration.

We conclude, then, that we have no ground to suppose that in the view of the apostles the proper observance of the Lord's Supper depended upon the presidency of an ordained person, any more than it did upon the use of a certain fixed form or instrument which carried within it a mysterious consecrating power. That forms should gradually be developed, and that with the enlargement of the Church its representative acts should come to be performed by representative persons, was the inevitable result of more elaborate organisation. And when an organised Church has its rules as to forms and office-bearers, the celebration of the sacrament in disregard of those rules is no doubt irregular, and is therefore to be deprecated as detrimental to the unity of the body and the peace

and edification of its members. But, as in the case of baptism, a distinction must here be made between what is irregular and what is invalid.[1] And it seems clear that in apostolic times, at all events, it was customary for Christians to meet together to partake of the sacred Supper, whether an office-bearer of the Church was present or not; and that they broke the bread and passed round the wine of the Lord's institution, with the full consciousness that they were thereby not only symbolically proclaiming the Lord's death, and renewing their vows of allegiance to Him, and reminding themselves of His promised return, but enjoying a real and personal communion with a present and gracious Redeemer.

[1] Cf. Lecture V., p. 233 f.

LECTURE IX.

Paul's Doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

Much has been written of late years on the subject of supposed Pauline influences both on the history and the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. One English writer, indeed, Dr. Percy Gardner, has gone so far as to suggest that the Lord's Supper, as an institution, was utterly unknown in the earliest days of the Church, and owed its very origin to the Apostle of the Gentiles, whose predominant influence, accordingly, must be traced in the Synoptic narratives of what took place in the upper room in Jerusalem on that night in which Jesus was betrayed. It is true, of course, that the Corinthian Epistle was written a considerable time before any of the existing Gospels, even the earliest; and Dr. Gardner's suggestion is that while the original apostolic tradition told of a last supper which Jesus held with His disciples, it had nothing to say of a comparison of the bread and wine to His body and blood, but that this part of the story was adopted by the evangelists from Paul's account in the eleventh of 1 Corinthians, while that account, again, rested not upon the primitive apostolic tradition of what actually took place at the farewell supper, but upon a strange vision which the apostle had after a visit to Eleusis, supplemented to some extent by his own "mythopœic faculty."[1] Alternately, Dr. Gardner offers us the

[1] *Origin of the Lord's Supper, passim.* It is worth noting that Anrich, who is the most recent authority on the relations between Christianity and the Mysteries, remarks of this work, "Als Curiosum erwähnt sei die Ableitung des Abendmahls aus den Eleusinien bei Percy Gardner" (*Das antike Mysterienwesen*, p. 111).

theory that if Paul did receive from the Jerusalem apostles "the imagery of the Supper," at all events the saying "This do in remembrance of Me" rests solely on his own authority; so that it was through Paul alone that the historical Supper of Jesus with its parabolic imagery was converted into an institution for the Christian Church.[1] Others, again, who do not question either that Jesus gave the bread and the wine to His disciples with the accompanying words of explanation, or that He further said, "This do in remembrance of Me," maintain that Paul, at all events, wrought a profound change upon the primitive doctrine of the Supper, by which the spiritual ideas of Jesus were materialised, and the simple memorial rite which He had given to His followers was transformed into a mysterious theurgic action. The points raised by such theories as Dr. Gardner's have been anticipated in what was said of the historical Supper of Jesus. We have seen that there are no sufficient grounds for calling in question either that Jesus distributed the broken bread and the wine to His disciples, with the explanatory words about His body and blood, or that He instructed them to keep the feast in remembrance of Himself. But the further question whether Paul, while receiving this tradition from the earlier apostles, radically altered the doctrine of the Supper, or even modified it in any essential points, still remains to be dealt with. What we have now to do, accordingly, is to examine Paul's various references to the subject, and to endeavour, on grounds of exegesis, to arrive as nearly as we can at the Pauline doctrine of the sacrament.

I. It is not a little striking that Paul's teaching with

[1] *Origin of the Lord's Supper*, p. 13 f. There is something amusing about the way in which Dr. Gardner, after propounding his double-barrelled theory, adds, with an air of grave historical impartiality, "On the whole, I feel that it must be left for criticism to decide whether the first or the second of the views which I have stated is preferable" (p. 15),—as if criticism had no further choice than between one or other of his two options.

regard to the Supper is entirely confined to one of his writings, the First Epistle to the Corinthians. In that Epistle, however, there are no fewer than three passages in which it is either directly mentioned or plainly alluded to, two of them being in the tenth chapter and one in the eleventh (x. 1–13, 14–21, xi. 17–34).[1] In each case, it is to be noticed, the apostle introduces the subject, not with a view to the elucidation of doctrine, but for an immediate hortatory purpose. In the first passage (x. 1–13) he is warning his converts against the dangers and temptations by which they are beset. He reminds them that though the Israelites were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat and drink the same spiritual drink, they were overthrown in the wilderness notwithstanding. His conclusion is, that the Corinthians themselves, although they have the corresponding benefits of baptism and the Lord's Supper, must take diligent heed lest they also should fall. In the second passage (x. 14–21) he is warning them in particular to flee from idolatry. And as he perceives an analogy between the Lord's Table and the heathen sacrificial feasts in which some of the members of the Corinthian Church had been tempted to partake, an analogy resting upon the fact that both the Lord's Supper and the idolatrous feasts are means of fellowship, with Christ in the one case and with demons in the other, he exhorts them to refrain from any participation in the sacrificial meals of the heathen, since it is not possible to drink at once of the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. In the third passage, again (xi. 17–34), he is dealing with certain painful abuses which

[1] As has been said already in discussing Paul's doctrine of baptism, it is impossible to make out a case for a reference to the Lord's Supper in 1 Cor. xii. 13. And the old idea (cf. Kahnis, *Abendmahl*, p. 139 ff.), which has recently been reaffirmed by Spitta (*op. cit.*, p. 323), that the Supper is referred to in what Paul says about marriage in Eph. v. 29–32, is extremely fanciful, and commends itself to very few critical scholars.

had made their appearance in Corinth in connection with the observance of the Supper; and is thus led to give not only an account of the original institution, but a definite explanation of it, in order that the Corinthian disciples may be kept from profaning the ordinance through not realising its purpose. But though these three references to the Lord's Supper are prompted by practical motives, and are of a purely incidental nature, they are nevertheless of immense doctrinal value. For Paul gives us what we find nowhere else in the pages of the New Testament—not merely a narrative of what Jesus did and said at the Table, but certain express interpretations of His acts and words; and though these interpretations are somewhat fragmentary, owing to the fact that they are designed only to present such aspects of the sacrament as bear upon this or that practical point with which the apostle happens at the moment to be dealing, yet when they are pieced together they enable us to form a pretty clear conception of Paul's doctrine of the Supper, a conception which we can then compare with the thoughts of Jesus, as these have been gathered from the primitive apostolic tradition represented by the various historical narratives.

1. It is in the opening verses of the tenth chapter of 1 Corinthians that we find Paul's earliest reference to the subject of this sacrament. He has just been speaking of the need for strenuous effort in the Christian life if we hope to receive the incorruptible crown (ix. 24–27); and he now points, by way of solemn warning, to the experiences of the Israelites at the commencement of their national history. He reminds his readers how the fathers were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and how in the wilderness they also ate of the manna and drank water from the rock (x. 1–4). And as there can hardly be any doubt that he is alluding here to baptism and the Supper, this passage becomes a *locus classicus* for the intimate

association of these two ordinances, for the limitation of the New Testament sacraments to these two, and for the formation of a general idea on the subject that will include both and cover both. The teaching of the passage with regard to the doctrine of baptism has already been discussed; but now let us see what special bearing it has on the Pauline doctrine of the Supper.

The two points on which in particular our attention requires to be fixed are the meaning of the term "spiritual" in the phrases "spiritual meat" and "spiritual drink," and the question whether rabbinical ideas as to the experiences of Israel in the wilderness are to be regarded as normative for the apostle's thought with regard to the sacrament of the new covenant. Catholic interpreters usually take the expressions "spiritual meat" and "spiritual drink" in the sense of a meat and drink that were supernatural as to their very substance; and so they find here the germ of the doctrine of the Real Presence. And even Spitta affirms that at this point Paul uses the word "pneumatic" or spiritual to describe not only the source from which the food and drink of Israel were derived, but their very nature and substance; and hence he concludes that Paul has set agoing that process of materalising the idea of Jesus with regard to the Supper which by and by reached its goal in the doctrine of transubstantiation.[1] But to read such meanings into the word "spiritual" is both unscriptural and unexegetical. To quote the excellent remarks made by Bishop Gore in another connection, "Any thing or process, whether material or no, is, according to the New Testament use of the word, spiritual, in which the Holy Spirit, or generally spiritual purpose, effectively manifests itself, and which it effectively controls. Isaac was born 'after the Spirit' by contrast to Ishmael, who was born 'after the flesh' not because he was less materially born, but

[1] *Urchristentum*, pp. 307–310.

because the divine Spirit was specially evident in the circumstances of his birth." [1] When the manna, therefore, is called spiritual meat, and the water spiritual drink, there is not the slightest ground for supposing that Paul meant that they were spiritual in virtue of anything transcendental in their substance. They were spiritual because they were express gifts of God to His people, and because, if received as such, they were spiritually as well as physically beneficial to the receivers. This is the very thought which the Old Testament itself brings out in that beautiful passage by which Jesus was strengthened in the hour of hunger and temptation: "He fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every thing that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live" (Deut. viii. 3). Pneumatic or spiritual, then, expresses a purely religious idea; and it is altogether unreasonable to attempt to assign any kind of physical or metaphysical meaning to the word in its application here to the manna and the water by which the Israelites were sustained in the wilderness, or to the elements of the Lord's Supper which the apostle doubtless had in his mind when he made use of this illustration from the experiences of the Jewish fathers.

With regard to Paul's language as to the spiritual rock which followed Israel in the wilderness, which rock, he says, was Christ, it is the view of Calvin and many other expositors that, by a species of metonymy, Paul uses the rock for the water which flowed from the rock, so that his meaning is that it was the water, not the rock, by which the Israelites were followed. This is a view, however, which does not do justice to the natural sense of the apostle's language. To insist, on the other hand, as even Alford does, that Paul has adopted in its entirety the rabbinical

[1] *Body of Christ*, p. 126; cf. Alford, *in loco;* Lobstein, *La doctrine de la Sainte Cène*, p. 98 ft.

tradition that the rock of Rephidim rolled onwards after the journeying host, giving forth a stream of water all the way, is not only to credit Paul in his Christian days with little power of discrimination between the traditions of the elders and the statements of Old Testament Scripture, but seems to be contrary to his own express declaration, "The rock was Christ." These words rather imply that Christ, in His pre-existent divine nature as the Son of God, accompanied the Israelites through all their wanderings, and that it was by His immediate personal intervention that the thirsting people were supplied with water. And this view has the further advantage, as Godet remarks, that it gives spiritual homogeneity to the two covenants, by making them rest on the identity of the divine head of both.[1] As Christ accompanied the people of the old covenant in all their journeying, so, under the new covenant, He is with His people all the days. As He supplied the Israelites with water, so He nourishes Christians at the Table with the water of Life. But there is nothing in what Paul says to lead us to imagine that Christ is partaken of in the sacrament in any physical or quasi-physical manner, through being objectively present in the elements. It is evident that in his reference to the rock he expressly distinguishes between the giver and the gift, between the spiritual rock itself and the water which flowed from it. He does not represent the Israelites as partaking of Christ in any realistic sense, but as drinking of the water that came from Christ.[2] And in like manner Christ is spiritually present in the Supper to impart His grace; but there is nothing here to justify the notion that He is objectively present in the elements themselves.

But whatever view we take of the apostle's attitude to the Jewish legends to which he evidently alludes, we must

[1] *Commentary on First Corinthians*, ii. 58.

[2] The "of" in the A.V., which has been retained in the R.V., is apt to be misleading, for it suggests a partitive genitive. In the original we read, *ἔπινον ἐκ πέτρας*—they drank from, or out of the rock.

not, in any case, allow ourselves to suppose that those traditional fancies are to be regarded as determinative at this point for Paul's doctrine of the Lord's Supper. If certain of the rabbis held that the manna and the water were not only gifts of the divine grace, but substances altogether supernatural and celestial, so that what an inspired psalmist has poetically described as "angels' food" (Ps. lxxviii. 25) was indeed such food as angels might be thought to use, it is not to be concluded that any such metaphysical ideas regarding the manna and the water are to be imported into Paul's teaching regarding the sacrament. This could only be done, as Lobstein has very clearly pointed out, by supposing that the apostle's conception of the Supper in the present passage is nothing but the corollary of an allegory in use among the Jewish schools with regard to the experiences of Israel; while, as a matter of fact, it is plain that the starting-point of his thought is the spiritual privileges possessed by the Corinthian Christians themselves, and the danger which they are incurring of perishing in spite of them all; while his references to the Old Testament types are simply illustrations brought in to make his warning more pointed and vivid. It is correct, no doubt, to say that Paul draws the rabbinic typology into the service of the Christian faith; but it is out of the question to represent the latter as determined at this point by the former.[1]

The doctrinal teaching of this passage, accordingly, may be summed up as follows:—(*a*) Paul regards the Supper as no mere human ordinance, but a positive divine institution

[1] See Lobstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 100, 101. He remarks very justly that Paul would never have employed the strange expression "were baptized unto Moses" if he had not set out from the notion of Christian baptism. And Weiss says, yet more fully, "Paul has certainly not transferred to the Supper a traditional notion of Jewish theology regarding the manna and the water from the rock (Rückert, p. 215 ff.), but, as is undoubtedly the case when he looks upon the passage through the Red Sea as a baptism, has worked out the typical view of these experiences of salvation on the part of Israel in conformity with his idea of the nature and meaning of the Supper" (*Biblical Theology of the N. T.*, i. 467).

—an express gift of the heavenly grace bestowed upon the Christian Church, as the manna and the unfailing water were bestowed upon the congregation of Israel. (*b*) He conceives of the Supper as spiritual nourishment. This does not mean, however, that he thinks of the elements as possessed inherently of some mysterious supernatural power, but only that they are the instruments of a spiritual purpose, and so are spiritually nourishing when spiritually received. (*c*) He thinks of Christ Himself, the spiritual rock, as the source of the spiritual blessing of the Supper, and of those who partake of this sacrament as being brought thereby into an immediate personal relation with the Lord.

2. Turning now to the second of Paul's three passages (x. 14–22), we find that it stands in a close connection with the one we have just been considering, and is introduced like it for purposes of practical admonition. Among the sins which, in spite of their privileges, had brought ruin upon the fathers of Israel, and against which the apostle had already warned the Christians of Corinth, was the sin of idolatry. And now he takes up in particular an alluring and subtle form in which this sin presented itself to Gentile Christians, who lived in the midst of a pagan world with which they had themselves quite lately been identified, and to which they were still linked, in many cases, not only by all the associations of their past lives, but by powerful family and social ties.[1] The form of evil he refers to is the taking part in heathen sacrificial feasts; and his argument is designed to show that those who do so bring themselves into a direct relation to demonic influences. For when Paul asks, "What say I then? that a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything?" (ver. 19),

[1] The great stress which Paul lays in 1 Corinthians on the spiritual dangers that spring from idolatrous surroundings is pointed out by Professor W. M. Ramsay, who holds that it is a mistake to say, as most commentators do, that impurity was the special enemy and danger in Corinth. See *Expositor*, 6th Ser., vol. ii. p. 439 ff.

we must not take this to be an expression of a belief on his part that the heathen deities are nothing at all, that they are absolutely non-existent. So far as language goes, we might as well assume that he thought that the things sacrificed to idols were non-existent as that the idol powers themselves were non-existent. In the context and elsewhere he makes it perfectly evident that he regarded the worship of the heathen as offered to real beings. When he says that an idol is nothing (x. 19, viii. 4), he only means to express his strong contempt for it; but he undoubtedly held that in pagan worship a real homage was being rendered to real existences. In accordance with the pure monotheism of later Judaism, however, he conceived of those existences not as gods but as demons or evil spirits. And in his view, those who in any way took part in idol worship, even if it were only by sitting down at a heathen sacrificial feast, were bringing themselves into a degrading fellowship with those dark demonic potencies (ver. 20).[1] To prove this point, Paul cites two analogies—the communion of the Christian with Christ at the Lord's Table, and the communion of the Jew with Jehovah in partaking of the sacrifices of the altar. What is certain here beyond dispute is that in all these different spheres — the pagan sacrificial feast, the Jewish sacrificial meal, and the Christian Supper, Paul holds that a real communion is established between the worshipper and the object of his worship. Unless he assumed this for the Lord's Supper, the nerve of his analogical proof would be cut; for it is precisely the reality of the communion in the one case as in the other on which he bases the incompatibility of the idea that the same persons can drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons, or be partakers of the Lord's Table and of the table of demons (ver. 21).

Regarding Paul's conviction that there is a real com-

[1] See Weiss, *Biblical Theology of the N. T.*, i. 360; Meyer, *Corinthians*, i. 303 ff.

munion in the Lord's Supper between the Christian and Christ there can be no manner of doubt. But now comes the further question as to the character and mode of this communion; and it is here that divergence arises. When the apostle says, "The cup of thanksgiving which we give thanks for,[1] is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ?" (ver. 16), does he imply that in the Lord's Supper we somehow partake of the substance of the Lord's body and blood really present in the elements? So it is maintained by the representatives of all the various "Catholic" and "Catholicising" theories.[2] But if we hold to the analogy in Paul's intention between the Lord's Supper, the Jewish sacrifices, and the heathen sacrificial feasts, as regards the reality of communion, we must abide by the analogy also as regards the character of the communion thereby established. Not, of course, that we can determine Paul's whole view of the nature of our communion with Christ in the Lord's Supper by his thoughts regarding the communion of the Jew with Jehovah in a sacrificial meal, or of the heathen with the demons in the sacrificial feasts; that would be altogether out of the question. But, at all events, it has to be insisted that the analogy he draws in the present passage does not permit us, in looking for his doctrine of the Supper, to go beyond what the analogy itself suggests. Moreover, and this is a point of import-

[1] That this is the meaning of τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν there can be little doubt. See Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of N. T. Greek*, p. 767; and cf. what is said in Lecture VI., p. 260, as to the meaning of εὐλογεῖν and its practical synonymy with εὐχαριστεῖν.

[2] Even Alford, though he feels it painful to allude to the "caricature of this real union with Christ which is found in the gross materialism of transubstantiation," insists that "the strong literal sense must here be held fast, as constituting the very kernel of the apostle's argument. The wine is the blood, the bread is the body of Christ." Which, be it noted, is *not* what Paul says. And this body and blood of Christ, Alford proceeds to remark, "we receive into us, make by assimilation parts of ourselves." What precisely he means by assimilation he does not explain.

ance, we must observe what is primary and what secondary in the apostle's analogical argument; what is the subject of which he is principally thinking, and what the illustrations by which he seeks to elucidate it. We have seen that in the opening verses of the chapter it is baptism and the Lord's Supper that are uppermost in his mind, while the Old Testament types are introduced only to give emphasis to his thoughts about the Christian ordinances. But in the present passage, on the contrary, it is the idolatrous feasts of which he is immediately thinking, as the whole context shows; and the Communion of the Lord's Supper is brought in, as also the Jewish sacrificial meals, purely by way of secondary reference. It is only as it bears on the heathen sacrificial feast, therefore, that the Lord's Supper here comes into view at all; and, consequently, nothing can be held in this case to be asserted of the latter that would not be applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to the former. Now, when we ask whether Paul is laying down here a doctrine of realistic participation in the object of worship that will apply alike to the Greek, the Jewish, and the Christian sphere, the answer is not difficult. For it is certain that neither Paul nor any other religiously instructed Jew of that age imagined that Jehovah was personally embodied in the sacrifices of the altar. Even if it were established that the primitive Semites, like other primitive races, believed that in partaking of sacrificial blood they were literally partaking of the deity, at all events no such ideas can be introduced here. When Paul speaks of the communion of the altar,[1]

[1] Sometimes, from a comparison of this expression with 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14, the conclusion has been drawn that Paul regarded the Lord's Table as an altar. So far from this, it is noticeable that in both cases he appears expressly to avoid the term. In the earlier case the comparison is drawn, not between a ministering priesthood under the old and new covenants respectively, but between the O.T. priests and the preachers of the gospel. In the present case, in spite of his use of the word altar in connection with the sacrifices of Israel, the apostle, when he passes to the Lord's Supper, speaks only of the Lord's Table. See Lightfoot, *Philippians*, p. 266.

he appears to be referring to the beautiful words in Exodus: "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto Me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thy oxen: in all places where I record My name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee" (Exod. xx. 24). The personal presence of Jehovah was guaranteed at the altar where He was worshipped, and where He had promised to manifest Himself in blessing; but nothing could be further removed from the thoughts of the prophets, or of the better minds in Judaism ever after the time of the prophets, and nothing, we may be certain, was further removed from the thoughts of Paul himself, than the idea that Jehovah was so made present within the gifts laid upon the altar, and subsequently set upon the table of the sacrificial meal, that those who partook of the food of that meal were thereby literally partaking of the Deity Himself. Similarly, too, with the sacrifices and sacrificial feasts of the heathen. Paul believed, as has been said, in the existence of demons, and held that in their idolatrous cults it was really demons that the Gentiles were worshipping. But who will affirm that he imagined that fellowship with the demons was brought about through the incarnation of the demons themselves within the sacrificial flesh in such a manner that those who ate of the latter were at the same time eating the former? And yet as he draws a precise parallel, in respect of the fellowship established in either case, between the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons, the Table of the Lord and the table of demons, we have no right to make any assumptions in the one case as to the manner in which the fellowship is effected which would not be equally applicable to the other.

If, therefore, there is no ground for supposing, in the case either of the Jewish or the heathen sacrificial meals, that Paul conceived of the fellowship of which he speaks as established by participation in the very substance of the

object of worship, it follows from the nature of his analogy that there is no ground for the idea that he is here teaching a doctrine of the objective presence in the Supper of Christ's body and blood. Rather, it must be said that it is a spiritual presence and a spiritual communion that he is thinking of in every case, a presence and a communion which are mediated indeed by the religious acts of the worshippers, but not a presence which is outwardly embodied either in flesh or bread or wine, not a communion which is realised essentially by any process of physical assimilation, whether with regard to the demonic or the divine.

In seeking, accordingly, for the contribution yielded by this passage to the apostle's doctrine of the Supper, it must be kept clearly in view that the subject which he is immediately discussing is participation in idolatrous feasts, and that the Christian sacrament is dealt with only as it has a bearing upon that particular topic. But even if this fact is ignored, as it frequently is, and the references to the Supper are looked at in an isolated way, they do not bear out the materialising constructions that are constantly put upon them. When we are told, for example, that we must hold fast to the literal sense of the words in verse 16,[1] or that the twice repeated ἐστι in that verse is nothing else than the "copula of being,"[2] it appears to be overlooked by those who write in this way that they themselves no more think of taking ἐστι literally, or as the very copula of being, than the barest symboliser does. For to take Paul literally at this point would be to regard him as saying that the cup "essentially is" the communion of the blood of Christ, and the broken bread "essentially is" the communion of the body of Christ. This, however, would be sheer nonsense; and so it is silently altered into something quite different, namely, that the cup and the bread are the media whereby the communion takes place.

[1] Alford, *in loco.*

[2] Schaefer, *Das Herrenmahl*, p. 345.

It must further be observed that any interpretation which seeks to make out from Paul's language with regard to communion of the body and blood that he held that the body and blood of Jesus were literally present in the elements, is met at once by the great difficulty of saying what body and blood are meant. Is it the body and blood of the earthly Jesus who instituted the Supper and gave Himself up to the death of the cross, or is it the glorified body and blood (if we can speak of glorified blood) of the heavenly Christ? A similar question came before us in connection with the original Supper, and we saw how absolutely without foundation the assumption is that at His last meal Jesus, in some mysterious and unexplained fashion, was already dispensing to His disciples the glorified body of His future heavenly condition. The question, however, presents itself here again; for at the time when Paul was writing, the earthly forms of Christ's existence had long since been laid aside, and if the body and blood of a present Lord were literally eaten and drunk in the sacramental observances of the Corinthian Church, it must have been His glorified body and blood of which the apostle was thinking. But now the difficulty emerges that in the passage before us the body and blood are spoken of not with any apparent reference to His glorification, but from the point of view of His sacrifice upon the cross. For by setting the Lord's Supper alongside of both Jewish and heathen sacrificial meals, Paul is clearly alluding to a preceding sacrifice. And when, in connection with this sacrifice, he speaks of the blood of Christ, and of the bread which is broken as standing for the Lord's body, it seems apparent that he is thinking of the great sacrifice which was offered by Jesus in the days of His flesh—a conclusion which is confirmed when we find that in the next chapter he says quite explicitly of the celebration of the Supper: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye

proclaim the Lord's death till He come." But if the blood of which Paul speaks is the blood that was shed as a sacrifice for our salvation, and the body is the body that died on the cross of Calvary, it follows that the communion of the body and blood of Christ on the part of the Church cannot mean a real participation of that body and blood. On the contrary, we must conclude that while Paul holds that in the Lord's Supper there is a real communion of the Christian with Christ, and while he regards participation in the bread and wine as the outward means through which this communion is brought about, he does not conceive of the Lord's body and blood as being objectively present within the elements, so that those who partake of the latter are thereby appropriating the former. Communion of the body and blood is communion with the personal Christ through appropriation of the fruits of that sacrifice which is represented by the broken bread and by the wine. This is all that the present passage justifies us in saying. In Paul's view the Christian had fellowship with the Lord at the Table, as a pious Jew had fellowship with Jehovah through the sacrifices of the altar. In the former case the communion, no doubt, was fuller and more intimate, as lay in the very nature of the revelation of God in Christ. But in both cases the communion, while mediated by divinely appointed rites, was essentially a spiritual communion from first to last.

Having described the cup of thanksgiving as a communion of the blood of Christ, and the broken bread as a communion of His body, Paul adds in the following verse: "Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one body;[1] for we all partake of the one bread"

[1] The body here is not the literal body of Christ, but the ethical body or Christian community, as in xii. 12, Col. i. 18. It is no objection to this that σῶμα has been used in the preceding verse in the sense of Christ's personal body, since there it is expressly differentiated as the body of Christ, in association with the parallel phrase, the blood of Christ.

(ver. 17, R.V. margin). This is not the rendering of the verse which is usually preferred by those who adhere to the doctrine of the Real Presence.[1] For the most part they adhere to the Authorised Version, which reads, "For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread"; and they endeavour to find here some support for the idea that, as the bread is the very body of Christ, we partake of that body by partaking of the bread. The other, notwithstanding, is the simpler and more natural rendering, not only when the sentence is looked at by itself, but when its precise bearing upon the apostle's argument is properly appreciated. For while the objection is raised that according to this view the sentence is taken out of the connection of Paul's thought, and turned into a parenthesis, and rendered altogether "vapid,"[2] this criticism must be attributed to a failure to grasp the drift of the argument as a whole. For Paul, it must once more be repeated, did not introduce this reference to the sacrament with any doctrinal intention, but from purely practical motives. And while his nearest motive was to warn his readers against the temptation to idolatry, another motive hardly less pressing, as the whole passage shows, was to exhort them in these very matters of which he is writing to think of others as well as of themselves (vers. 24, 28, 29, 32, 33). They are to consider not only the danger of being personally drawn into a polluting fellowship with demons, but the sin against Christian charity which would be involved in doing anything that would give offence to the consciences of their brethren. And so what Paul says in verse 17 is not a superfluous or vapid remark, nor yet a parenthetical digression from the line of his argument, but an indication that the significance of the Supper is not confined to its religious

[1] Cf., however, Schaefer, *op. cit.*, p. 352 f.; Gore, *Body of Christ*, p. 3.
[2] Alford, *in loco*.

values, but reaches out at the same time into the social and ethical sphere.[1] Remember, he would say, that as we all partake of the one bread so we all belong to the one body; and consider that this is another reason why a Christian should not take part in idolatrous feasts, since by so doing he would not only be separating himself from Christ, but breaking up the brotherly union of believers, that union which is so strikingly expressed and realised when the many partake of the one bread.[2]

3. When we pass from the tenth to the eleventh chapter of 1 Corinthians, we find that here also it is the practical interest that leads the apostle to introduce the topic of the Lord's Supper (xi. 17–34). He has heard of divisions that exist among the Christians of Corinth, divisions that make themselves apparent at the common meals held in connection with the observance of the sacrament. With these abuses, which rendered a true celebration of the Lord's Supper impossible, he sets himself to deal; and it is for this purpose, as the construction clearly shows, that he brings in his account of the original institution. "Shall I praise you in this?" he says; "I praise you not. For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." The γάρ that introduces the historical statement lets us see that Paul is appealing to the Supper of Jesus with the view of impressing upon his readers the utter inconsistency between the origin and significance of the ordinance and the Corinthian way of observing it.

[1] See Lobstein, *op. cit.*, p. 110. Cf. and contrast Pfleiderer, *Paulinism*, i. 240, 241.

[2] We cannot connect what Paul says here with the language of the Eucharistic prayer in *Didaché*, ix. 4: "As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, and gathered together became one, so let Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom." The idea that a loaf made up of many grains is a symbol of the Church made up of many individuals is not found in Paul, nor anywhere else in the New Testament. What Paul says is simply that, just as the Lord's Supper brings us into communion with Christ, so by that very act it brings us into fellowship with one another, a fellowship which is visibly expressed in the common participation of the one bread.

We have already examined Paul's narrative of the historical Supper, and endeavoured to show that there is no reason to regard it as anything but a reproduction of the primitive apostolic tradition on the subject, exhibiting its verbal peculiarities, no doubt, as was natural, and indeed inevitable, at a time when formulas were not dreamt of, but presenting no signs of any essential variations of the kind that might be attributed to doctrinal developments of his own. The references which he makes at this point to the common meals and their relation to the Eucharist have also been previously discussed. What still remains to be dealt with, and what especially concerns us now, is certain important contributions to the interpretation of the Supper which we find in the closing verses of the chapter.

And first we have, immediately after the narrative of the institution, what may be described as the apostle's view of its primary significance: "For (γάρ) as often as ye eat this bread and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come" (ver. 26). Here, again, we must note the significance of the introductory conjunction by which the sentence is related to what precedes. It implies that Paul's statement is to be regarded not merely as one view which he took of the meaning of the Supper, but as the express explanation which he assigns to the words of the Lord he has just quoted: "This is My body which is for you. . . . This cup is the new covenant in My Blood. . . . This do in remembrance of Me." In other words, Paul regarded the eating of the bread and the drinking of the cup as being fundamentally acts of representation and memorial, representation and memorial of the Lord's death; and this was the sense in which he understood the acts and words of Jesus at the institution of the Supper. It is very difficult to imagine that Paul believed Jesus to have meant that by eating the bread and drinking the cup the communicant would literally receive His body and blood,

and yet in the explanation of the Lord's words which he appends, instead of saying, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do eat and drink the very body and blood of the Lord," would only have said, "ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come." And the difficulty rises into something like an inconceivability when we remember that he was dealing at that very moment with the profanation of the Lord's Supper of which the Corinthians had been guilty, and that a doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the elements, if he had held such a doctrine in any shape or form, would have put so tremendous a weapon of censure into his hands.[1] And so in a statement which from its definiteness and preciseness, as well as its immediate exegetical connection with the institutional words of Jesus Himself, must be regarded as revealing the very core of Paul's doctrine of the Supper, we find him describing it as a proclaiming of the Lord's death.

But the apostle immediately continues, "Wherefore (ὥστε), whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (ver. 27). Now here again it is often assumed that if to eat or drink unworthily is to sin against the body and blood of the Lord, the very substance of the Lord's body and blood must necessarily be present in the bread and wine that are eaten and drunk. But this is an assumption that has not the slightest ground to rest on.[2] Once more we must appeal to the initial conjunction, the "wherefore" by which this statement is linked on to the one that immediately precedes. Some one has said that

[1] Cf. Dale, *Essays and Addresses*, pp. 390, 391.

[2] It is surely not without significance that Paul in this verse and the following continues to speak of the elements as "the bread" and "the cup." Seeing the stress which he lays upon the right discernment or discrimination of the Lord's body, would he not himself have shown more discrimination in the use of the terms by which he referred to it if he had believed in the supernatural union of the elements, after consecration, with the very Person of Christ?

it is impossible to understand Paul until you have learned to understand his conjunctions. And certainly the whole of the long passage in the eleventh of 1 Corinthians in which the apostle deals with the observance of the Supper has suffered many things at the hands of dogmaticians who have selected detached verses for discussion, without paying any regard to the "fors" and "wherefores" by which they are woven into the complex web of the writer's thought. That introductory "wherefore," which makes the present verse a deduction from the one that goes before, forbids us to put any other construction upon eating the bread and drinking the cup than the one which Paul has just assigned to those acts, namely, that they are a proclamation of the Lord's death; and precludes us from thinking that he means that the sin of those who communicate in an unworthy manner lies in this, that they are doing despite to the actual body and blood of the Lord objectively present in the bread and the wine.[1] The logic of Paul, then, does not suggest the realistic interpretation of this verse; and certainly it is not implied in the phrase "guilty of (*i.e.* guilty of offence against) the body and blood of the Lord." For the profanation of any generally recognised religious symbol is a sacrilege in the view of every pious mind, apart altogether from any idea of an objective presence within the symbol of the person or thing symbolised. If it is regarded as a deadly insult to a country when its flag is torn down and trampled in the dust, surely it is an insult to Jesus Christ Himself, and to the great sacrifice of His body and blood, if the symbols of that sacrifice are treated as profane or common things, even though it is not imagined that these symbols, somehow or other, have been transformed into that which they symbolise, or substantially identified with it in a miraculous manner. And if we understand the author of Hebrews in a spiritual sense

[1] Cf. Schmiedel, *Hand-Commentar*, 1 *Kor.*, *in loco*.

when he speaks of those who crucify the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame (vi. 6), or of those who have trodden Him under foot and counted the sanctifying blood of the covenant as an unholy thing (x. 29),[1] it is just as natural to understand in a spiritual sense also what Paul says here about the offence against the body and blood of the Lord, more especially as this is the meaning which is evidently demanded by the consecution of his thoughts.[2]

The case is not altered when he says yet further, with regard to those who participate in an unworthy manner, "For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body" (ver. 29). The unworthy manner of eating and drinking to which Paul refers does not lie in theoretic unbelief, least of all in failure to believe in the "Catholic" doctrine of the Real Presence; it does not spring from a defective power of mental concentration upon spiritual things, nor yet, as tender consciences have too often been apt to imagine, from a deep sense of personal unworthiness to sit down with Jesus at His Table. The whole context proves that he is referring directly to those disgraceful abuses which had made their appearance at the common meals of the Corinthian Church, by which an occasion that should have been dedicated to the most sacred memories was turned into a scene of selfish riot, the holy symbols of Christ's body and blood were dragged down to the level of a worldly feast, and it became impossible to celebrate the Lord's Supper at all. This is the apostle's starting-point at the beginning of the passage, and it is to this that he returns at the close (cf. vers. 20, 21, and 33, 34). Further, the judgment of which he speaks, as the context again makes plain, is not eternal condemnation, but

[1] It is only such writers as Dr. Moberly who discover in the last-mentioned passage a reference to the Eucharist. See his *Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 269.

[2] See Lobstein, *op. cit.*, p. 120 ff.

temporal judgments manifesting themselves in sickness and even in death, with which God had visited the Church; but which, nevertheless, He sent not merely for penal purposes, but as chastisements that might turn the hearts of His people away from their transgressions, so that they might be delivered from the condemnation that awaits the world in the great final judgment (vers. 30–32). And all this, both their unworthy manner of eating and drinking and the judgments of heaven that had fallen upon them, came from their "not discriminating the Lord's body," *i.e.* not distinguishing the symbols of the Redeemer's sacrifice from common meat and drink, and thus failing to realise the meaning and purpose of the sacred signs, with the result that the whole *κυριακὸν δεῖπνον* from beginning to end was turned into little else than a greedy and godless feast.[1] Here also there is nothing to imply the idea of a Real Presence of Christ's body in the elements, since this phrase, like the parallel one just commented on, refers to the sin against the Lord's body only in the sense in which Paul understands Christ's body to be present in the Supper; and he has distinctly explained that the bread and the cup which are designated as the body and blood of the Lord are the memorial symbols of His death (ver. 26). None the less, in Paul's view these symbols are to be treated with the utmost reverence, not only because of what they stand for as signs, but because it was the Lord Himself who placed them in the hands of His people, and appointed them to be used in remembrance of Himself and as a means of communion with His Person.

The much discussed question as to what, in Paul's estimation, was received in the Supper by the unworthy communicant is thus very simply answered: he received

[1] The two divergent interpretations of *διακρίνω*, according as the verb is taken to mean "to discern" or "to discriminate," "entscheiden" or "unterscheiden," are not essentially different. A clear judgment implies both discernment and discrimination. See Heinrici in Meyer's *Kritisch-exeget. Kommentar, in loco.*

nothing but bread and wine. But he ate and drank judgment to himself notwithstanding, and that for two reasons. First and especially, because he did not appreciate the truth that this bread and wine are the symbols of the Lord's body and blood by which the Church proclaims His sacrificial death until He come, and a specific means of grace bestowed by Christ upon His people. But further, it must be added, because he sinned not only against the crucified Jesus, but against his own brethren in the Church. For while it is not exegetically correct to take "not discerning the Lord's body" to mean "not having regard to the fellowship of Christians with one another as members of the body of Christ,"[1] yet the fact that Paul begins his whole discussion of the subject by making contempt for the Church of God the ground of the impossibility of eating the Lord's Supper (vers. 20–22), and brings the discussion to a close by warning his readers that lack of consideration for one another in the common meals and the attendant Eucharist will render their coming together a coming together unto judgment (vers. 33, 34), makes it seem legitimate, at least, to say that in this passage, just as in the second of the two passages in the preceding chapter, the apostle had clearly before his mind the ethical as well as the religious motives of the Supper, and that in all his thoughts of the sacrament these two motives were very closely intertwined.

The only other doctrinal point in the present passage that remains to be referred to is the fact that Paul presents

[1] See a striking chapter on "Discerning the Body of Christ" in Mr. Oman's *Vision and Authority*, especially pp. 160, 161. The objection to Mr. Oman's view that failure to discern the body of Christ means nothing but a practical denial of the brotherly fellowship, is that it seems hardly possible not to understand "the Lord's body" in verse 29 in the same sense as in verses 24 and 27; while it is evident that the phrases, "This is My body which is for you," and "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," in these two verses, refer not to the Church as the body of Christ, but to the body and blood of Jesus given to death on our behalf.

the Supper in an eschatological aspect when he says, "As often as ye eat this bread and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come" (ver. 26). "Till He come"; it seems plain that these words are an echo of the great saying of Jesus at the Supper in the upper room, about the day when He should drink the new wine with His disciples in His Father's kingdom. They confirm the view taken in a previous lecture, that that saying was uttered with direct reference to the Christian institution, and not merely with reference to the paschal feast; for they show that such was the view which was taken by Paul. But they also cast a beam of light upon Paul's own habitual thoughts with regard to the Lord's Supper. There can be little doubt, I think, that the memorial aspect of the ordinance was the one which bulked most largely in his mind; but this brief phrase is enough to show that the sacred rite always presented itself to him in an anticipative aspect also. "Till He come" is not merely the limit that Paul sets to the days of observance. Certainly the words mark a limit. They affirm that a time is coming when these earthly Suppers of the Church shall cease. But their positive content is their chief content, for the Lord's return is not only an end but a consummation, a consummation, moreover, which is at the same time a new beginning. The celebration of the Supper is to cease only because its symbols and memories and meanings are all to be absorbed in the glorious manifestation of the Lord Himself. In the words of an ancient bishop of the Church, "After His Parousia there will be no more need of the symbols of His body, the body itself appearing."[1] This is a thought which evidently forms an integral part of Paul's Eucharistic doctrine. At the Lord's Table he felt that memory and hope were blended together, and the Supper became "a link between the Lord's two

[1] Theodoret.

comings; the monument of the one, the pledge of the other."[1]

II. And now, as we endeavour to look at Paul's doctrine of the Lord's Supper in its entirety, the first thought that suggests itself is that, in spite of the incidental and fragmentary way in which it is presented to us, it is perfectly consistent throughout. Sometimes, no doubt, the contrary is affirmed. Spitta, for instance, tells us that what the apostle says in the tenth chapter of 1 Corinthians contradicts what he says in the eleventh chapter. For in the latter chapter the emphasis falls upon commemoration of the death of Jesus, and the thought of eating and drinking is in the background; while in the tenth chapter the death of Jesus finds no place, and there comes in instead the idea of participation in certain mysterious forms of nourishment. What Paul says in the one chapter, accordingly, this writer regards as incompatible with what He says in the other; and he thinks it necessary to apologise for this lack of consistency on the part of the apostle, by reminding us that Paul was "no correct systematician."[2] But apart from its mistaken exegesis in detail, which has been pointed out already, Spitta's line of criticism is vitiated by its inattention to the fact that each reference which Paul makes to the Supper and each phase of it which he presents is suggested by some thought or purpose that has emerged in the course of his general argument. If at the beginning of the tenth chapter he speaks of participation in spiritual food, it is because he has before him the analogy of the manna and the water in the wilderness. If further on in the same chapter he introduces the idea of communion, it is because he is thinking of the degrading fellowship of the heathen sacrificial feasts. If, again, in the eleventh chapter he makes the proclamation of the Lord's death the great

[1] Godet, *First Corinthians, in loco.* [2] *Urchristentum*, p. 308.

characteristic feature of the celebration, it is not only because he appears in any case to have held this to be the fundamental quality of the ordinance, but also because he desires to shame the Corinthians out of their selfishness and greediness by reminding them that in its very nature the Lord's Supper is a commemoration of a great act of self-sacrifice undertaken by Christ on our behalf. And so Paul brings the Supper before us in different aspects, not because he is an inconsequential and incorrect thinker, but because the sacrament has different though complementary sides, and because he attached himself in each case to that particular aspect of it which was directly applicable to his hortatory intention.

And now, to sum up the doctrinal teaching of Paul with regard to the Lord's Supper, we may say—

1. In the first place, and this is his fundamental conception, the Supper is a commemoration of the Lord's death. This does not mean, however, that the celebration of the rite is nothing but the raising of a monument beside the highway of time to a great historic fact of the past. On Paul's lips the proclamation of the Lord's death on the part of Christians is the proclamation of His redeeming sacrifice, and so includes faith in Christ Himself as the Redeemer of His people. And as this faith, which the apostle certainly assumes, is the basis of *all* communion with Christ, whatever special forms communion may take, it is absurd to attempt to make out any contradiction between the thought of the Supper as a commemoration and the thought of it as a communion and participation. Rather, in the very proclamation of the Lord's death there is a communion by faith with the Lord Himself, and an appropriation of the blessings that flow from His sacrifice.[1]

2. But further, Paul looked upon the Supper as a communion with the Lord in a sense that is special and

[1] Cf. Beyschlag, *N. T. Theology*, ii. 239, 240; Lobstein, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

peculiar. He did not imagine that Christ was objectively present in the elements, or that there was some specific religious content in the bread and wine, whether sensible or supersensible, which is communicated in no other way to the bodies and souls of Christian people. But he believed that in this ordinance of His own appointing the Lord draws near to offer Himself with all the fruits of His redeeming death to faithful hearts, and that faith, quickened by seeing and touching and tasting the outward symbols, through which it is brought into direct historical contact with Him who first put the bread and the wine into the hands of His disciples, may be drawn out at the Supper with unusual warmth and freeness to conscious fellowship with the Saviour and conscious appropriation of His saving gifts. And further, he believed that in the Lord's Supper Christians may realise as nowhere else, not only their communion with Christ Himself, but their fellowship with one another in the unity of the body, of which Christ Jesus is the head.

3. Once more, although this is a thought to which he only alludes, Paul conceived of the Supper as containing within it the promise of the Lord's glorious return. As it carries us backwards to Christ's death, and also gives us the assurance of communion in the present with Him and with one another, so it points us to the future, and reminds us that still better things are reserved for us in the great days to come. Thus it nourishes us in hope, even as in faith and in love, and brings Jesus before us not only as the gracious Saviour who suffered for us in the past, and the exalted Lord who by His Spirit is with us all the days even unto the end, but as the Christ of the coming Parousia, who shall change His people into His own glorious image, and give them the inheritance of the kingdom of God (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 22–26, 49, 50).[1]

[1] It is interesting to notice that in the prayer over the broken bread in the

When, therefore, we compare Paul's doctrine of the Supper with what appears to have been the intention of Jesus in the original institution, as that is suggested by the historical narratives, we do not find that there is any of that wide divergence between the two which some modern critics are inclined to discover. It is not the case that Jesus never ordained a memorial rite for His followers, and that the Lord's Supper owes its very origin to Paul. It does not appear to have been the case that the original Supper in the upper room had no connection either historical or doctrinal with the Jewish Passover, and that it was Paul who turned the sacrament into an antitype of the ancient paschal feast. There is no evidence whatever that the apostle materialised the spiritual ideas of Jesus and transformed the simple symbolic meal into a mysterious theurgic action. The setting of the Pauline Supper is different, no doubt, from that of the Supper of Jesus, for instead of a Jewish paschal meal we have now a social meal of a more general character. Further, in the case of Jesus, the Supper, taking place before His death, was meant in large measure to be a prophecy and interpretation of that death which was now at hand; while in the case of Paul, writing after the great sacrifice was for ever accomplished, it is the death rather that interprets the Supper. Hence in what Jesus says there is more of a forward look to the death of the cross, but also to the glory that lay beyond, when the cup of gladness and reunion should take the place of the present cup of sacrifice and separation; while in Paul's utterances it is the backward look that is most prominent, and the memorial aspect is the chief of all. But with Paul, as

ninth chapter of the *Didaché*, the eschatological aspect of the Supper is emphasised: "Let Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom" (ver. 4). The words were doubtless suggested by Matt. xxvi. 29 and 1 Cor. xi. 26. Cf. Harnack, *Lehre der Zwölf Apostel*, p. 30; Schaff, *The Oldest Church Manual*, p. 193.

with Jesus, the leading ideas, though differently emphasised, are the very same, namely, commemoration, communion, and anticipation.

III. The view we have taken of Paul's doctrine of the Supper, from an examination of the three passages in 1 Corinthians in which he deals with the subject, is both confirmed and qualified when we set his special utterances regarding the sacrament alongside of his general Christian teaching. We cannot fail to notice the comparatively small space that is occupied by the doctrine of the Supper in Paul's theology as a whole. Only in one epistle does he ever mention it; and even there he is led to do so in each case by purely practical motives. In truth, when we reflect upon the fact that, but for the shortcomings and misdemeanours of the Corinthian Church, the apostle might never have referred to the subject at all, we are half tempted to echo the famous "*O beata culpa*" which fell from Augustine as he thought of that primal human transgression which led to the sending of the Only-Begotton Son.[1] But for the faults of the worldly and selfish Christians of Corinth, we might never have obtained a single glimpse into the mind of Paul on the subject of the Lord's Supper.

And we must observe not merely that Paul refers to the Supper in only one of his writings, but that he never attempts to bring his thoughts regarding it into any express connection with the leading ideas of his theological system, so as to suggest that his doctrine of the Supper formed an essential part of what he regarded as the fundamental truths of Christianity.[2] Nowhere, for example, is the

[1] Cf. Bishop Ken's paraphrase of Augustine's thought—

"What Adam did amiss
Turned to our endless bliss.
O happy sin, which to atone
Drew Filial God to leave His throne."

[2] Cf. Schultzen, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

sacrament set in any definite relation to those two central ideas of the Pauline theology—the righteousness of God on the one hand, and the faith that justifies on the other. Nowhere is its connection shown with the life of progressive sanctification through the operation of the Holy Spirit on the Christian heart. And though, under any conception of its efficacy, the sacrament lends itself so naturally to the thought of the indwelling Christ (a thought over which Paul was continually brooding), so much so indeed that High Churchmen constantly assume that it is the chief or even the sole instrument for securing the inhabitation of our Blessed Lord in the members of His body,[1] when the apostle is expounding and enforcing this great inspiring truth of the Christ within he never appears to allude to the sacrament in the most distant manner. Rather, he teaches that it is through the life of faith in the Son of God that Christ Himself lives within us (Gal. ii. 20), or that Christ is dwelling in our hearts when the Spirit of Christ is dwelling there (Rom. viii. 9, 10). And even when he speaks of the quickening of our mortal bodies, he conceives of this quickening as realised not through any reception in the sacrament of the body of Christ, but through the direct operation of God's indwelling Spirit (Rom. viii. 11).

Now, from these very significant facts two conclusions seem to follow :—

(1) They serve as an additional proof on behalf of the view that the Lord's Supper, as an institution of the Christian Church, did not owe its origin to Paul, but belonged to the primitive tradition of the earliest community, and so must be traced to no other than Jesus Christ Himself. For the circumstance that Paul makes

[1] Bishop Gore, for example, speaks of "the only sort of abiding which the New Testament suggests—the indwelling of Christ *in* the members of His body, of which it is the glory of the sacrament to be the earthly instrument" (*Body of Christ*, p. 138).

so little of the Supper from the theological point of view indicates the absence of any theological motive on his part for seeking either to create the ordinance or to give it a new and peculiar doctrinal or institutional form. It reinforces the conclusion, to which we have been led on many other grounds, that he simply handed on faithfully what he had received from the apostolic tradition, without altering it or modifying it in any essential manner.

(2) But, further, it also seems to follow that, with all his fidelity to tradition and to what he believed to be the mind of Christ in this matter, Paul, while deeply impressed with the value of the Lord's Supper in the Church, both from the religious and the social points of view, both as a personal means of grace and a bond of brotherly unity, never dreamed of putting it into the central place in his thoughts about Christ and Christianity, as he would necessarily have done if he had believed that it was the principal, if not the exclusive, way in which the essential life of the great Head of the Church is communicated to the members of His body. So far from this, Paul's Epistles show on every page that he invariably looked upon faith as the true and the sufficient channel of Christ's saving and sanctifying grace. Thus, in his view, the Lord's Supper is a perpetual spring of blessing only because Christ makes in it continually a special appeal to the faith of His people, through a definite outward institution of His own appointing, and thereby pledges Himself to a special manifestation of His presence and grace, such as countless Christian hearts have experienced, when faith takes the Lord at His word and comes to meet Him at His Table.

LECTURE X.

The Lord's Supper: Johannine and other Teaching, and the Later Transformations.

We have now considered the significance of the Lord's Supper as that is to be gathered from the acts and words of Jesus Himself at the original institution, from its outward history in the primitive Church, and from the special Eucharistic references and general doctrinal teaching of the Apostle Paul. It only remains to examine any further evidence that may be derived from the remaining books of the New Testament, and to glance at the light that is thrown on the New Testament teaching as a whole by the early post-apostolic literature and history.

I. What immediately strikes us when we pass from the Pauline writings to the Epistles of James and Peter, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the whole circle of the Johannine writings, is the fact that in none of these is there a single direct reference to the Lord's Supper, nor even an indirect statement regarding it, unless that be found in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel. This, of course, does not in the least affect the historical and institutional claims of the ordinance; but it has a very immediate bearing upon the question of the doctrinal significance which was assigned to it by the writers in question. It does not show, as has sometimes been imagined, that they were ignorant of the very existence of the sacrament, nor even that they attached slight value to it; but it does point at all events to this, that the Supper can

hardly have been in their estimation "the basis of distinctively Christian worship," or "the one *essentia* of the Church's life."[1] It is all very well to discount this "reserve of the New Testament," as Dr. Moberly calls it, by asserting that the doctrine of the Eucharistic sacrifice is everywhere assumed as "the basal Christian principle," and to maintain that here if anywhere we may apply the canon that the fundamental importance of any element in Christianity is almost in inverse ratio to the frequency of its mention in the New Testament;[2] but such a canon can hardly be made to apply to cases where a writer's speech, if interpreted by the ordinary laws of exegesis, points to a meaning precisely the opposite of that which is supposed to underlie his "reserve," or in other words his complete silence.

James, for example, has no reference to the sacrament. And it is difficult to believe that in the case of this author we must assume, notwithstanding, that he regarded the Eucharistic sacrifice as the very foundation of all life and worship that are distinctively Christian, especially when we find him saying to Christian men that it is the implanted word, by which he means, as he goes on to show, the word which is heard and done, which is able to save their souls (i. 21, 22). Still less is Dr. Moberly's theory of "reserve" congruous with the fact that James describes Christianity, even when it is considered from the point of view of a religious observance (*θρησκεία*, *cultus*), as consisting not in any ritual ordinance, but in a life of personal purity and gracious charity (i. 27).

In the Petrine Epistles we find a similar absence of any allusion to the Lord's Supper. But in 1 Peter the apostle speaks of the grace which God bestows, and conceives of it not as sacramental grace, but as the grace which

[1] Thus Dr. Moberly, *Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 265.
[2] *Op. cit.*, *ibid.*

comes through the preaching of the gospel (i. 10–12). He speaks of Christ's blood and of Christ's body, but both the body and the blood are regarded not as food partaken of in the Eucharist, but as the means of our redemption in the past (i. 18, 19, ii. 24). And even when he thinks of a present nourishment with a view to the development of Christian life, it is "the sincere milk of the word" that suggests itself to him as the means of nurture and thereby of spiritual growth (ii. 2). He tells us, indeed, of a holy priesthood, but it is a priesthood that is common to all believers (ii. 5); while the sacrifices that are offered by this holy priesthood are spiritual sacrifices, which are more particularly described in the context as a proclamation of the excellencies of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvellous light (ii. 9).

In Hebrews, again, the same feature presents itself—a total lack of any explicit reference to the Lord's Supper. And here the writer's silence is all the more significant, because he is dealing with Christian truth not in an incidental fashion, but comprehensively and dogmatically, and specifically is approaching it from the ceremonial side and by a series of elaborate contrasts between the ritual of the old covenant and the worship of the new.[1] And he is not only silent regarding the sacrament of the Supper, but silent even where one would say that he must inevitably have spoken if he had regarded it as the very *essentia* of Christianity. It is noteworthy that at the beginning of the sixth chapter, where he gives a brief catalogue of the first principles of Christ, including what he calls "the teaching of baptisms," he makes no mention of the Supper (vi. 1, 2); and it is hardly less striking that even when he refers to the blood of the covenant he does so without any apparent allusion to the cup which Jesus described as His covenant-blood (ix. 15–20, x. 29, xii. 24). It is

[1] See Prof. A. B. Davidson, *Hebrews*, p. 196 ff.

true that attempts have sometimes been made to discover a subtle and continuous line of allusion to the Eucharist running all through the Epistle; but these attempts are exegetically of little value, and need not detain us.[1]

There is, however, one passage in particular of which a word must be said, not so much because any satisfactory or even plausible grounds can be alleged for giving it a sacramental interpretation, but because of the immense inferences that are sometimes drawn from it in the endeavour to build up on the soil of the New Testament the theory of the Eucharistic sacrifice.[2] In the last chapter of Hebrews the words occur, "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle" (xiii. 10). Now, not only scientific Continental exegetes like Weiss and Holtzmann, and a no less scientific Scottish scholar like the late Professor Davidson of Edinburgh, but Bishops Lightfoot and Westcott, who may be taken as typical representatives of the best Anglican scholarship, are perfectly clear upon this point, that the *θυσιαστήριον*, or altar, in this verse has nothing to do with the Lord's Table; this being a use of the word of which

[1] See J. E. Field, *The Apostolic Liturgy and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, *passim*; Moberly, *op. cit.*, p. 268 ff. In support of his highly strained methods of interpretation, Dr. Moberly makes an appeal to the facts of primitive Church history. "It hardly seems to be sufficiently realised," he remarks, "how largely a true exegesis must depend upon the historical question what was, and what was not, the practical thought and life of the apostolic Church" (p. 269). Very true. But when Dr. Moberly proceeds to *assume* that history assures us that to the members of the apostolic Church the Eucharist, conceived realistically as the body and blood of Christ, was the climax and culmination of their Christianity and the regular channel of their spiritual life, he seems to forget that, in order to arrive at the facts regarding the thought and life of the apostolic Church, we are dependent in the first instance upon a correct exegesis of our New Testament documents. The question is whether "a true exegesis" of those passages in our authoritative sources which certainly bear upon the celebration of the Supper yields what Dr. Moberly imagines to be the facts with regard to the thought and life of the apostolic Church. If it does not, then his ingenious interpretation of the numerous "hints" towards a Eucharistic doctrine which he discovers in the New Testament are vitiated by his unwarranted assumptions regarding the history.

[2] See Moberly, *op. cit.*, pp. 269, 270; Gore, *Body of Christ*, pp. 260, 261.

probably we have no example until the time of Eusebius, early in the fourth century.[1] If, therefore, the writer thought of any concrete object at all when he spoke of the Christian altar, it was the cross that was in his mind. But the probability is that by the altar he meant not the cross itself as a material object, but the sacrifice of the cross, the self-offering of Jesus, in which through faith Christians have a right of spiritual participation.

Coming, finally, to the Johannine writings, we find ourselves face to face with one of the most remarkable features of the whole situation. For in the entire cycle of these writings the sacrament as an outward rite is never once directly referred to.[2] No contribution to the doctrine of the Supper can be found in the Apocalypse; for though the figure of Jesus knocking at the door and promising to come in and sup with those who hear His voice (iii. 20), and the benediction pronounced upon those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb (xix. 9), have often served as appropriate topics for Communion sermons and addresses, they do not refer to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper any more than those equally familiar texts in the Song of Solomon which have served a like purpose from time immemorial. The Epistles of John are similarly silent,[3] a fact which is all the more noticeable because the ideas of communion with Christ and abiding in Him are so central and so prominent throughout. But fellowship with the Father and with the Son is represented by the writer as mediated by the declaration of the word

[1] See Weiss in Weiss-Meyer, *Commentar, in loco;* Holtzmann, *N.T. Theologie*, ii. 285; Davidson, *Hebrews, in loco;* Lightfoot, *Philippians*, 265, 266; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 456 ff.; Hatch, *Hibbert Lectures*, 302. Lightfoot, in view of the context, expresses his surprise that any one should so have interpreted the word; and Westcott says that there is not only no example at this early stage of the application of θυσιαστήριον to the Table, but no room for such an application.

[2] See Westcott, *Gospel of St. John*, p. 113.

[3] On the possibility of an indirect allusion to the sacrament in 1 John v. 6–8, see Lecture III., p. 125 f.

of life (1 John i. 2, 3, ii. 24); and the secret of abiding in Christ is found not in participation in the Eucharist, but in believing in the name of Jesus Christ and loving one another (1 John iii. 23, 24).

It is when we come to the Gospel of John, however, that the attitude to the Lord's Supper becomes most striking and most significant. For this Gospel, as every one is aware, although so full and detailed in its narrative of the last hours of Jesus, contains no account of the institution of the Supper.[1] Under any view of the sacrament the fact is surprising. An explanation may be found in the supposition that John, writing at a time when the other Gospels were well known throughout the Church, did not consider it necessary to repeat once more the story so familiar now to every Christian. But while this explanation may be adequate enough upon a humbler conception of the meaning and purpose of our Lord's acts and words at the Table, it can hardly be professed that it meets the case when the sacrament is looked upon as the essential means of propagating the divine life through a miracle which is a virtual extension of the Incarnation. This remark would hold true of any writer who set out to give such an account of the history of Jesus as might lead those who believed to find life through His name (John xx. 31). But very especially it holds true of John. For John, we must remember, is distinctively the Evangelist of the Incarnation; so that it becomes all the more difficult to believe that if he had regarded the mystery of the

[1] Spitta has a theory that originally the Fourth Gospel did contain such an account, but that because it made too apparent the fact that the Last Supper was not a Passover supper, as the Church had now come to believe, it was subsequently excised. Then, in the next place, to complete his theory, he maintains that the passage vi. 51–59 was interpolated to make up for the defect occasioned by the excision. See his essay "Unordnungen im Texte des vierten Evangeliums," *Urchristentum*, p. 187 ff. See also *Urchristentum*, p. 220 f. Such a theory is mainly interesting as an illustration of Spitta's purely subjective methods of source-criticism.

Incarnation as repeated in each observance of the sacrament, he would have refrained from giving some record of those acts or words of Jesus by which this great miracle was accomplished at the Last Supper, and was thereafter to be perpetually repeated in the Church by a ministering priesthood.

But while the Fourth Gospel gives us no narrative of the institution by Jesus of the Lord's Supper, we have in the sixth chapter that great discourse on the bread of life which is often held to do more than atone for John's historical omission. To this discourse, accordingly, we must now direct our attention. Any consideration of it brings us at once to the very heart of the Johannine problem, for it raises all the much-disputed questions regarding the relation of the author to Jesus and His words. Of these questions in general something was said in the introductory lecture; but here, as in the conversation with Nicodemus in the third chapter, we have a particular instance of the kind of difficulties that have to be faced by the student of John's Gospel. Speaking broadly, there are two views which may be taken of the origin of this discourse. According to the one, we have here what is substantially and to all intents and purposes an authentic account of words which were spoken by Jesus in Capernaum; according to the other, we have a disquisition which is put into the mouth of Jesus, indeed, and which may even be coloured by some of His thoughts, but which essentially is a composition of the Evangelist, whether he was John the Apostle or some later and unknown writer.[1] And as there are two main opinions

[1] Little success has attended efforts to discriminate in this discourse between the words of Jesus and those of the evangelist. Holtzmann justly speaks of the hopelessness of attempting to undertake a "chemical separation" between original historical words of the Lord and Johannine idealising and developing (*N. T. Theologie*, ii. 505). And Spitta's view, that the section 51–59 is a later interpolation, is not only perfectly arbitrary, as has been said already, but in itself unworkable. Verse 63 presupposes 51–59 as a constituent part of the text, instead of making it probable that it was inserted at a later date.

regarding the origin of the discourse, so there are two main views as to the meaning of that part of it which specially concerns us—the paragraph, namely, about eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood (vers. 51–58). According to one set of commentators, these words have no immediate bearing upon the Lord's Supper; according to the other, they are expressly and designedly a description of its nature and purpose.

Now, it is one of the peculiarities of the sacramental view of the passage, that it brings together two classes of interpreters who are at the very opposite extreme from each other in judging of its origin—on the one hand, High Churchmen of all shades and kinds, Roman Catholic, Neo-Lutheran, and Anglican; and on the other, most representatives of the advanced critical wing.[1] But while both classes are agreed as to the direct sacramental reference of the passage, each holds its view for different, and indeed contradictory, reasons. The High Churchman, accepting the discourse throughout as an authentic utterance of Jesus, maintains that the Lord was here giving a definite prophecy of the future institution, and describing its nature so particularly that His acts and words on the night of His betrayal many months afterwards are precisely explained by what He said at Capernaum.[2] The advanced critic, on the contrary, finds in the Eucharistic doctrine of the passage an evident proof that the discourse is no actual discourse of Jesus; since it is inconceivable that at this stage of His ministry, and to such an audience as He had before Him at Capernaum, He can have set forth the essential characteristics of the later sacrament of the Church, and have made life and salvation dependent there and then (ver. 53) upon the performance of an external rite which had no exist-

[1] See Holtzmann on this point, *N. T. Theologie*, ii. 499 f.
[2] Cf. Gore, *Body of Christ*, p. 28.

ence till long after, and which none of His hearers could possibly foresee.[1]

We cannot doubt that in this matter the advanced critic is much nearer the truth than the High Churchman. It is not advanced critics only, but practically all scholars who have any regard for historical interests, who now maintain that these words cannot be the words of Jesus and at the same time contain an immediate and primary reference to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Westcott, for example, whose testimony is especially valuable in this connection, says: "To attempt to transfer the words of the discourse with their consequences to the sacrament is not only to involve the history in hopeless confusion, but to introduce overwhelming difficulties into their interpretation which can only be removed by the arbitrary and untenable interpolation of qualifying sentences."[2] But while the advanced critics are so far right in holding that it is impossible, without falling into the most egregious historical solecisms, to imagine that Jesus introduced an exposition of the Eucharist into His discourse at Capernaum, it does not follow that they are correct in their conclusion that the passage has so manifest a connection with later sacramental ideas that it must be attributed not to Jesus Himself but to the evangelist.[3] It is all very well to say that the words are really addressed by the evangelist to His readers, and not by Christ to His hearers; but we must remember, as Lobstein has reminded us, that even if the evangelist allowed himself liberties in the reproduction or composition of the Lord's discourses, he cannot have gone so far as to

[1] Holtzmann says of the passage: "All this lies beyond the Synoptic horizon, and all this, moreover, the Johannine Christ speaks a year before the actual moment of the Lord's Supper under the presupposition that He could be understood. In truth, this should suffice to solve the 'Johannine question,' as it were by a paradigm." *Op. cit.*, ii. 507, 508.

[2] *Gospel of St. John*, p. 113.

[3] Holtzmann, *op. cit.*, ii. 499. Cf. Schultzen, *Das Abendmahl im N.T.*, p. 77 f.

make a complete abstraction from the historical situation.[1] Yet if the much-debated section (vers. 51–58) is interpreted as teaching a realistic doctrine of the Supper, it is evidently put out of all relation both to the historical circumstances and to the rest of the chapter (cf. vers. 35, 47, 63). And especially the words "flesh" and "blood" (*σάρξ* and *αἷμα*), in which it is sought in particular to discover the sacramental reference, are never employed elsewhere in the New Testament as descriptive of the elements of the Supper; but, on the contrary, "body" and "blood" (*σῶμα* and *αἷμα*) are regularly so used, and had clearly become the technical sacramental expressions of the apostolic Church long before the Fourth Gospel was written. It is difficult, therefore, to believe that a writer who composed this section with the express purpose of making a statement regarding the Supper would not have used the ordinary sacramental terms, above all in a discourse which he desired to represent as coming from the lips of Jesus Himself, and as anticipative of the occasion when the Lord took the bread and the wine, saying, "This is My body," "This is My blood."[2] On the other hand, it was perfectly natural that when Jesus at the institution of the Supper was speaking of His body broken He should use the word *σῶμα*, which properly denotes the body as an organism; while at Capernaum, where it was spiritual nourishment that was in question, He should employ the term *σάρξ*, which applies not to form but to substance, and so is more in keeping with the analogy of the multiplication of the loaves.[3]

[1] *La doctrine de la Sainte Cène*, p. 142. Cf. Meyer, *John*, i. 295 f.

[2] Cf. the remarks of Wendt, *St. John's Gospel*, p. 137. We may add that it goes to support the view that a post-apostolic author, composing a discourse in which he desired to represent Jesus as prophetically announcing the institution of the Lord's Supper, would have used *σῶμα* and not *σάρξ*, when we find in the unauthentic addition to verse 56 in Cod. D (similarly Cod. Amiatinus, etc.), "Except ye receive the body (*σῶμα*) of the Son of Man as the bread of life, ye have no life in Him."

[3] Cf. Godet, *John*, ii. 251.

While, therefore, historical considerations forbid us to believe that Jesus discoursed at Capernaum on the subject of the Real Presence of His body and blood in the species of the Supper; there are no corresponding historical considerations which compel the conclusion that the evangelist is giving us here a statement of his own on the doctrine of the Eucharist, while putting it into the mouth of the Master.[1] On the contrary, both history and exegesis point to a quite different conclusion, and confirm us in the belief, already arrived at on wider grounds, that throughout this discourse Jesus is the speaker and the evangelist only the reporter, and that though the form of the address is due to the disciple, its leading ideas and expressions, at all events, have come to us from the very lips of the Great Teacher Himself.

Looking at the discourse as a whole, we find that it contains three main lines of thought. First of all, and with allusion to the miracle that He had just wrought in the multiplication of the loaves, Jesus tells the people of a meat which it is in His power to give them, a meat which they may obtain by a "work" that consists essentially in believing on Himself (vers. 26–31). Next, He describes this spiritual meat as the bread of life, and represents Himself now not merely as the giver of this bread, but as the bread itself; while He repeats again and again regarding this heavenly bread what He has said already regarding the spiritual meat, that faith in Himself is the condition of receiving it and so possessing eternal life (vers. 32–50). Then, finally, in the section with which we are specially concerned, the bread is described more particularly as His own flesh and blood, while the eternal life, of which up to this point faith has been represented as the medium, is now made to depend upon eating His flesh and drinking His

[1] It is pure assumption when Holtzmann says that the scene of John vi. 51–63 sets us in the midst of the controversies of the early part of the second century with their slanders about Θυέστεια δεῖπνα, etc. (*N. T. Theologie*, ii. 502).

blood (vers. 51–58). The most important question here is as to the meaning of the words flesh and blood. That they are precisely synonymous with the sacramental terms body and blood we have seen to be historically inadmissible, whether we look at them from the standpoint of Jesus Himself or that of the evangelist. But two other interpretations are still possible. Some modern scholars are of the opinion that flesh and blood are used here simply as equivalents for the human personality of Jesus as revealed in history, and that no allusion whatever is made to His death.[1] In this view the last section of the discourse introduces no new idea. Flesh and blood are simply equivalent to the single word "bread" which we find at the beginning (ver. 51) as at the end (ver. 58) of the section, and the meaning is that faith in the human nature of Jesus, through which God is revealed, is an eating and drinking of the divine life. Well, it is true, no doubt, that the single expression "flesh and blood" occurs not infrequently in the New Testament as a general designation for human nature, whether on its physical side (1 Cor. xv. 50) or more generally (Matt. xvi. 17; Gal. i. 16; Eph. vi. 12; Heb. ii. 14). In the present case, however, it must be noticed, we have to do not as in those other passages with the compound phrase "flesh and blood," but with two distinct terms, "flesh" on the one hand and "blood" on the other, which are looked at separately, and are even in a sense opposed to each other, for the flesh is to be eaten and the blood is to be drunk. And this presentation of the thought of Christ's blood in separation from the thought of His flesh clearly suggests the idea of His death, since it is only in death that we can think of human flesh and blood as thus dissevered.[2]

[1] So Lobstein, *op. cit.*, p. 138; Schultzen, *op. cit.*, p. 84; Holtzmann, *op. cit.*, ii. 500; Wendt, *St. John's Gospel*, p. 137 ff.

[2] It should be noted that the words, "which I will give" (ἣν ἐγὼ δώσω), in

Now, there are several considerations which bear out the view that Jesus is here referring to His death. It is true that it was not till a later period that He began to speak plainly of the decease that He should accomplish at Jerusalem, and to unfold the meaning of that great tragedy; but even before the time of this discourse at Capernaum He had alluded to His consciousness that His earthly life and mission would terminate in some sharp and sudden manner, as when He said that the days would come when the Bridegroom should be taken away from the children of the bride-chamber (Mark ii. 20), or announced to Nicodemus that it was necessary that the Son of Man should be lifted up, even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness (John iii. 14). And the historical setting of this discourse suggests how natural it was that the thought of His coming death should be present in His mind at that very time. The fact that He had been saddened by the sheer worldliness of the Messianic ideas entertained by the multitude made it natural for Him to be possessed by this thought. "Their wish to force a crown on His head," as Dr. Bruce says, "made Him think of His cross; for He knew that this idolatrous devotion to a political Messiah meant death sooner or later to one who declined such carnal homage."[1] Very significant, too, is that historical note near the beginning of the chapter: "Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was at hand." For it shows how the minds both of Jesus and the people would be occupied at that time with thoughts of the Passover and the paschal lamb, and how natural thus again it was that, from speaking of Himself as the bread of life, the Lord should pass on

verse 51, as applied by Jesus to His flesh, is wanting in most of the best MSS., and so has been omitted in the R.V. Holtzmann, Schultzen, and Lobstein appear to consider that the adoption of the shorter reading ties us up to the conclusion that no reference is made in the passage to Christ's death. But the grounds for holding that such a reference *is* made are much wider than they assume, and are altogether independent of this particular phrase.

[1] *Training of the Twelve*, p. 132.

to the further thought that it was through dying that He should become the bread of souls and the life of the world.[1]

As for the eating and drinking, it seems evident that they are nothing more than a figurative description of faith in Him who thus offers Himself to be the life of others. Precisely the same effect is ascribed to these acts as has already and repeatedly been ascribed to faith (cf. especially verses 47 and 53). And if it be asked why such a strong figure should now be employed instead of the simple idea of faith, the answer is not only that it serves to illustrate faith, which, in our Lord's conception of it, is the appropriation of His person into the most intimate union, but that the figure of bread, which Jesus had already used to describe His own person, demanded the figure of eating as its correlative (cf. the "hunger" of ver. 35), and that when He broke up the single idea of bread into the double idea of flesh and blood, with the view of suggesting that it is not His person merely, but His person as surrendered to death, that becomes the nourishment of men, the figure of drinking as well as that of eating was rendered necessary for the completion of the metaphor, just as when He represents Himself as the living water the appropriation of this living water is necessarily regarded as an act of drinking. But that drinking is nothing else than believing Jesus has already implied by saying, "He that believeth on Me shall never thirst" (ver. 35; cf. iv. 14, vii. 37, 38).[2]

We see, then, that as, on the one hand, regard for history forbids us to suppose that Jesus at Capernaum was foretelling and explaining the future institution of the

[1] Cf. the figure of the grain of wheat falling into the ground and dying, in order that it may bring forth much fruit (John xii. 24).

[2] It is curious to find Bishop Gore treating the spiritual interpretation of the passage as if it meant that "the heavenly food of the flesh and blood of Christ" is nothing but "an equivalent for faith." "Faith," he protests, "admits to the gift, but is not the same thing with it"; "faith receives but does not create" (*Body of Christ*, p. 22 f.). No advocate of the spiritual interpretation, we venture to say, ever supposed anything else.

Supper, so, on the other, neither history nor exegesis points to the conclusion that the leading ideas of the discourse are the ideas of the evangelist and not those of the Master. On the contrary, the discourse appears to spring quite naturally out of the actual circumstances in which our Lord was placed, and the concluding passage in particular, so far from standing out of all relation to what has gone before, and presenting the appearance of a supplement or interpolation, is a perfectly logical development of thoughts that have already been expressed. In the preceding paragraph Jesus has presented His own person under the figure of the bread of life; but now, to denote the fact, of which even at this stage of His ministry He was fully conscious, that it was through death that He was to become the world's true nourishment, He substitutes for the figure of bread the ideas of His own flesh and blood. He has represented faith as the special means of appropriation; but faith, in the presence of the heavenly food, has been most naturally conceived of as a satisfaction of hunger and thirst (ver. 35), and it is simply a continued use of the same figure when He speaks of it now as an eating and drinking of His flesh and blood. Thus the meaning of the passage may be fitly summed up in Augustine's brief but pregnant saying, "*Crede et manducasti*"—"Believe and thou hast eaten."[1] For it is of Himself essentially that Jesus speaks throughout, not of any rite or institution; and it is faith going out to His person and appropriating the blessings of His life and death that is fed with heavenly meat and heavenly drink, so that it receives the fulfilment of the promise, "He that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

But if this is the primary meaning of the passage, is there nothing in it that bears upon the sacrament at all? This is an important question, and it is a question that

[1] *In Joannis Evang.*, Tract XXV. 12.

has two aspects, according as we look at it historically from the point of view of Jesus or that of the evangelist. From our Lord's point of view, all that can be said is that the same spiritual truth which He here presents in a general form, and by means of a metaphor, He afterwards presented in a special form, and by means of definite symbolic acts and words.[1] That the later sacrament should correspond in its meaning with this earlier exposition of the spiritual truths which underlie it, will appear no more than natural to every one who believes in the self-consistency, to say no more, of Jesus as a teacher. To regard our Lord's language at Capernaum, however, as an express and intentional prophecy of the institution, can only be described as a glaring ὕστερον πρότερον. Nor does it seem correct to say, as even Dr. Westcott does, that the discourse is "a commentary upon the sacrament." Rather, we must affirm that the sacrament is an illustrative commentary upon the discourse. And this not simply for the general reason that a text precedes the illustration of a text, and a general principle its particular application, but for the special reason that we have no sufficient ground for supposing that at this stage of His ministry, a year before the end, our Lord had already determined upon the institution of the Supper, and had planned the very form which it was to take.[2]

But in this matter we have also to think of the point of view of the evangelist. For undoubtedly personal and contemporary notes are to be traced in this Gospel, so that we learn something from it about the writer's own thoughts, as well as about the life and teaching of Jesus. It is probably true, for instance, that even although this did not lie in their original intention, the words which Jesus spoke about eating His flesh and drinking His blood would

[1] Cf. Westcott, *Gospel of St. John, in loco;* Godet, *John*, ii. 251.
[2] Cf. Meyer, *John*, i. 294.

suggest the idea of the Supper both to John and his readers. The frequent repetition of the sacrament within their own experience had created such associations in their minds, that they could hardly fail to connect these words with the different and yet analogous words of the familiar institution. But this being assumed, what we have to consider is whether John so treats the Capernaum discourse as to justify any inferences on our part with regard to his own thoughts on the subject of the Lord's Supper. We must remember, then, that even though the main ideas of the discourse are those of Jesus Himself, we have not here to do with a *verbatim* report of what He said on the occasion, but with an account which involves selection, summarising, and arrangement on the part of the evangelist. We read in the appendix to this Gospel, that if the things which Jesus did were written every one, the world itself could not contain the books that should be written (xxi. 25). The remark is doubtless quite as applicable to the words as to the deeds of Jesus. John made a selection from the materials that filled his memory, he clothed what he said in his own unique style, and certainly he also arranged it in such a way as to reproduce the relations held by its several parts in the perspective of his own mind. And therefore it is noteworthy that just as he gives us in his Gospel no historical narrative of the institution of the Supper, and makes no direct reference to its observance in any of his other writings, so in the present case, when he has to do with a discourse spoken by Jesus which bore a close and striking relation to the sacrament, a relation of which, without doubt, John was fully conscious, he neither says a single word by way of connecting that discourse with the sacrament, nor so presents our Lord's leading ideas as to suggest that he himself believed that the bread and wine of the Supper are the essential *media* for the communication of the divine life. On the contrary,

the last words of his report carry us back again from the thought of eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood to the simple spiritual idea with which the passage began: "He that eateth this bread shall live for ever" (ver. 58; cf. ver. 51).

Specially significant, too, as bearing not only on our Lord's real intention in what He said at Capernaum, but on the evangelist's interpretation of it, is the fact that John records a conversation which took place between Jesus and His disciples immediately afterwards. The disciples themselves had been stumbled by what they had heard that day, and when Jesus perceived it He spoke the words which John had cherished in his heart ever afterwards as the true explanation of the Lord's meaning: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you, are spirit and are life" (ver. 63). Here we have not only Christ's key to His own discourse, but John's clear perception that this was the key. And so, if the phrases "eating the flesh" and "drinking the blood" suggested the thought of the Lord's Supper to those who had long been accustomed to the observance of the sacrament in the community, the fact that John is careful to record this explanatory saying may be taken to show that he desires the sacrament to be spiritually apprehended,—not as if the outward elements in themselves could profit anything, seeing that it is spirit alone that quickeneth; not as if these elements apart from the inward quickening could be compared to the words of Jesus, which carry within them His spirit and His life.[1]

[1] It does not seem necessary to discuss the various interpretations of verse 63, depending as they do on the various interpretations of the section 51–58. In any case, the words, "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing," express the truth in a general form, and are equally applicable to the outward sacrifice of Christ on the cross, the carnal apprehension of His historical manifestation (cf. 2 Cor. v. 16), and external participation in the sacrament. See Westcott, *in loco*.

Holtzmann and others have attempted to make out that the author of the Fourth Gospel carries the doctrine of the Lord's Supper beyond the point of the original institution, beyond the point even to which it was carried by Paul.[1] But Holtzmann's exegesis is interwoven with the presupposition that this Gospel was written not by John the Apostle, but by some unknown author of the second century; and if this historical presupposition is unjustifiable, the exegetical fabric is vitiated through and through. Very probably it is true that even in the lifetime of the apostle, and before this Gospel was published, tendencies were appearing in some quarters, through pagan and Jewish influences, to that materialisation of the sacrament of the Supper which by and by makes itself perfectly evident in the history of the Early Church. But so far is John from showing any sympathy with such tendencies, that it would be more correct to say that his consistent silence regarding the Lord's Supper, while it does not imply any disparagement of the institution, is a deliberate protest against its over-valuation;[2] and that the one passage in all his writings in which it may be supposed that the thought of the Supper was clearly, though only incidentally, present to his mind, expressly subordinates it by implication to the word and the Spirit.

John makes no positive contribution, then, to the doctrine of the Supper. He does not carry us beyond the point we have already reached. But he may be held to confirm what we have arrived at from our study of the

[1] Holtzmann, *N.T. Theologie*, ii. 507, 508.

[2] Cf. Lobstein, *op. cit.*, p. 152. See also Holtzmann, *op. cit.*, ii. 498, 499. For Holtzmann's treatment of the Johannine doctrine of the sacraments is marked by a curious tendency to waver between an admission of materialising notions and an emphasis upon the spiritual and ideal. The inconsistency finds its explanation not in any hesitation or confusion of view on the part of the evangelist, but rather in the difficulty of reconciling his plain teaching with the critic's desire to attribute that teaching in respect of its historical origin to a later generation than that of St. John.

words of Jesus and of Paul, namely, that Jesus is not present in the Supper except in a spiritual sense, and that the sacrament, with all its great value for the spiritual life of the individual, and the corporate as well as the spiritual life of the Church, is not, in any case, the indispensable basis of Christian worship, or the one *essentia* of the Church's life.

II. We have now completed our survey of the New Testament evidence as it bears upon the significance of the Lord's Supper in the apostolic age. It still remains, however, to inquire whether any light falls from the extra-canonical literature of the Early Christian Church that serves to elucidate this New Testament evidence. There are those, as we have seen already, who maintain that the subject should be studied in the reverse order—that the testimony of the ancient Catholic Church should be taken first, and the New Testament employed only as a test or proof of the Churchly doctrine. But if the New Testament is our absolute authority, as is practically admitted, it hardly seems a reasonable course of procedure to arrive at a doctrine of the Supper independently of its direct testimony, and then to refer to it for proof texts of one's formulations. This may be called using Scripture as the ultimate test, but it is really more akin to the fallacy of citing Scripture for a predetermined purpose. The only ground on which the claim could be properly urged that the Church of to-day must derive its doctrine of the Supper from the post-apostolic Church of the early centuries, would be the certainty that the Christian writers of those centuries were possessed of a measure of special inspiration which has subsequently been denied to Christian minds. That is a claim, however, which it would be very difficult to authenticate—if it were ever definitely made. And lacking that special guarantee of authority, it is difficult to see why the patristic authors should be entitled to that

extraordinary deference which is still frequently demanded on their behalf by Anglican, not to speak of Roman Catholic, dogmaticians.[1] It is a claim which certainly they do not make on their own account, which they are still further from conceding to one another,[2] and which above all appears to be very ill founded when examined in the dry light of history. Their ignorance of the very first principles of criticism, as illustrated by the utterly unhistorical use they make of the Old Testament, is patent to every reader, and constantly saps the value of their exegesis at the very roots. The fact, too, that the disturbing effect of extra-Christian influences upon their doctrine and practice can now be traced with a large degree of confidence, makes more and more apparent the danger of accepting at their hands the point of view from which we are to regard the scriptural teaching. Their one clear advantage over us lies in their comparative chronological nearness to the time of the Christian origins; but the limitations of this advantage, real as it is, must be carefully kept in mind. It gives great value to their testimony regarding matters of fact, such as the customs and opinions of their own time; and we have seen the helpfulness of such evidence already in dealing with the outward forms and connections of the Supper. But when we come to matters of judgment, of interpretation, of theory, of doctrine, the case is altogether different. In these respects, comparative chronological nearness does not necessarily confer any special privilege, else we should have to say that the scribes of our Lord's time had a better understanding of the prophets of Israel than the Christian scholars of the present day, or that the mind and art of Shakespeare were more fully appreciated during the years of the Puritan

[1] See Gore, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

[2] Witness the bitter dispute between Cyprian and Stephen of Rome on the subject of baptism, and the positive execrations poured out on Origen by Epiphanius, Theophilus of Alexandria, and even Jerome himself.

ascendancy than by the Shakespearean students of the nineteenth century.[1]

But the greatest objection of all to this method of setting up the post-canonical Christian literature of the first four or five centuries as furnishing the true standard of Christian doctrine, is that in that literature we find nothing of the nature of a consistent doctrinal type. Bishop Gore speaks of "a catholic tradition about the Eucharist—a teaching really universal and original—which is most plainly discerned in the ancient and undivided Church."[2] But this universal tradition proves to be little else than a myth when it is examined with a view to the discovery of anything like a uniform or even consistent doctrine on the subject of the Lord's Supper. "To quote in the same sentence," says a distinguished Anglican scholar of the present day, "Justin and Cyril of Jerusalem, Irenæus and Gregory of Nyssa, Tertullian and Hilary, Cyprian and Augustine, as if their combined testimony represented a constant tradition, is to ignore the great development of doctrine which accompanied the conversion of the Empire, and within a century carried primitive conceptions many steps beyond the point reached before the Council of Nicæa."[3] And even when we confine ourselves

[1] Cf. the following remark by Mr. Theodore Watts-Dunton, as illustrating the fact that propinquity in time is no guarantee of the intelligent sympathy of any particular age with a writer of the past, and chronological distance no barrier against it: "Wordsworth's High Church Pantheism and Coleridge's disquisitions on the Logos seem farther removed from the speculations of to-day than do the dreams of Lucretius" (*Encyc. Brit.*, 10th ed., xxv. 677). That this is no exaggeration may be perceived when we find Lord Kelvin concluding an address at the meeting of the British Association in Glasgow in 1901 with the words, "We are forced in this twentieth century to views regarding the atomic origin of all things closely resembling those presented by Democritus."

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 241.

[3] Prof. Swete, *Journal of Theological Studies*, Jan. 1902, p. 161. It must be borne in mind that the advocates of "Catholic" views of the Supper cannot appeal to a single conciliar decision on the subject during the first seven centuries of Christian history. The truth is, that there was no dogma regarding the Lord's Supper in the Old Catholic Church. As Anrich remarks, the most

to the pre-Nicene period, or, going farther back, to the still narrower epoch that divides the age of the *Didaché* and the *Epistles* of Ignatius from the time of Cyprian, the epoch, *i.e.*, which lies between the beginning of the second century and the middle of the third, it is impossible on any grounds of history to speak of a universal and original testimony which may serve as an authoritative exposition of the true doctrine with regard to the Supper of our Lord. What lies before us rather is a rapid and extraordinary transformation, whereby the writers at the end of the period are differentiated from those at the beginning, and differentiated still more markedly from the teaching and practice of Jesus and His apostles.

1. There are two lines, in particular, along which this transformation may be traced—the development of the idea of the Eucharist as a sacrifice offered to God, and the change in the conception entertained of the nature of Christ's presence in the Supper and of the consequent Eucharistic gift. Nowhere in the New Testament do we find the idea that in the observance of the Lord's Supper a sacrifice is being offered to God, much less the notion of a ministering priesthood by whom this offering is made.[1] On the other hand, the New Testament makes us familiar with the ideas that praise and prayer are spiritual sacrifices which should ascend to God from thankful hearts (Heb. xiii. 5; Rev. v. 8, viii. 3); that God will accept as a well-pleasing sacrifice what is bestowed upon His poor saints (Phil. iv. 18; Heb. xiii. 16); and that consecration of one's

diverse ways of looking at it on the part of many theologians stand quite unmediated alongside of one another; and, moreover, it is impossible from their speculations to draw a conclusion as to the views of the general Christian community (*Das antike Mysterienwesen*, p. 194).

[1] It is noteworthy that Bishop Gore rejects the strange view, still entertained by many High Churchmen, that τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν means, "Offer this in sacrifice for a memorial of Me before God." See his *Church and Ministry*, p. 208; *Body of Christ*, pp. 312 ff., 315 f.

self to God as a living sacrifice is a reasonable service on the part of Christ's people (Rom. xii. 1). And so, when we find the words προσφορά and θυσία, "offering" and "sacrifice," used by Clement of Rome and in the *Didaché* with reference to the celebration of the Eucharist,[1] we are still within the sphere of New Testament ideas. The name Eucharist (εὐχαριστία), which originally and properly described the prayer of thanksgiving over the elements, had come by the beginning of the second century to be applied to the communion service as a whole; and as the Eucharist was a spiritual service of thanksgiving and self-consecration, it was natural enough that it should be regarded as a sacrifice to God. Moreover, the sacrament of those days formed a part of a common meal for which contributions were freely brought by all who could afford to do so; and it was again perfectly natural, and in accordance with apostolic precedent, that these gifts of Christian love, of which the Eucharistic bread and wine formed a part, should be conceived of as an offering to God.[2]

There was little danger in all this, so long as the sacrament continued to be closely associated with a common meal, and so long as the offering was the act of the whole worshipping community. But when, by and by, the Eucharist came to be separated from the Agapé, the Eucharistic bread and wine lost that character of a freewill offering to God which they had previously shared with the other offerings of the social meal. And alongside of this there came another and a much more serious change. At first the Eucharist was a spiritual sacrifice offered by the whole community. The prayers of thanksgiving, moreover, were not fixed and efficacious formulas, nor was it the

[1] Clem. Rom., *Ad Cor.*, xl.; *Didaché*, xiv.

[2] See Harnack, *History of Dogma*, i. 205; Hatch, art. "Sacrifice," *Encyc. Brit.*, xxi. 139; Principal Lindsay, *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, p. 307.

prerogative of any standing official to utter them upon every occasion.[1] But even in Justin's time and circle there appear to have been foreshadowings of a great and portentous development. It is true that Justin regards the sacrificial act in the Supper as an act of prayer, and is very far from conceiving of the body of Christ as the material of a sacrifice.[2] And yet he sees in the elements the sensuous object of a sacrifice which consummates itself in the Eucharistic prayer offered by the presiding officer, and he conceives of the bread as becoming a memorial of the Lord's passion in virtue of this prayer.[3] And so already in Justin there are hints of the great transformation by which the Eucharist was converted from a simple sacrifice of praise into a mysterious sacrifice of propitiation. And when we come to Cyprian, Justin's fatal bud has blossomed, if it has not yet become full-blown. For, according to Cyprian, "the priest imitates what Christ did, and offers then in the Church to God the Father a true and complete sacrifice."[4] And the sacrifice, further, is nothing else than the sacrifice of the cross. "For," he says, "the passion of the Lord is the sacrifice which we offer."[5]

[1] See *Didaché*, x. 7.

[2] Cf. Harnack, *op. cit.*, i. 210.

[3] *Apol.*, i. 66. See Loofs in Hauck-Herzog's *Realencyklopädie*, i. 45, 46. Loofs shows that the transition from Justin to Cyprian is by no means so great as is commonly supposed. In Justin the germs lie enfolded which in Cyprian are developed. Moreover, during the period that separates the two these germs were steadily growing in the general mind through a combination of extra-Christian influences. Cyprian, therefore, is not so significant personally for the history of the Lord's Supper as he is usually represented by Protestant scholars, but probably did no more than put into clear-cut shape ideas as to the Eucharistic sacrifice which were pretty widely entertained in the early decades of the third century. See Harnack, *op. cit.*, ii. 136, note 2; Swete, *Journ. Theol. Stud.*, Jan. 1902, p. 166. Cf. the remark of Mr. C. Anderson Scott, that while in Justin there is no proof of the existence of the sacrificial idea, his expressions "display the *nidus* in which that idea took root" (*Critical Review*, March 1901, p. 125).

[4] "Ille sacerdos vice Christi vere fungitur qui id quod Christus fecit imitatur; et sacrificium verum et plenum tunc offert in ecclesia Deo patri" (*Ep.*, lxiii. 14).

[5] "Passio est enim Domini sacrificium quod offerimus" (*ibid.*, 17).

2. The transformation of view is not less apparent when we pass from the idea of the Eucharist as a sacrifice to the conception of the nature of Christ's presence in the sacrament, and of the consequent Eucharistic gift. The *Didaché*, that remarkable work which is perhaps the earliest of all our extra-canonical authorities,[1] presents us with a Eucharist which is conceived of on purely spiritual lines. At the Table thanks are given to the Father for life and knowledge, and these blessings are not represented as mediated in any way by the elements, but as being "made known to us through Jesus Thy Servant."[2] And in the post-communion prayer a contrast is drawn between the food and drink which God has given to men for enjoyment, and "the spiritual food and drink of eternal life" which He gives to His people through Jesus Christ.[3] The precise nature of the view held by Ignatius is a subject of much dispute, partly because of the scantiness of the available materials for forming a judgment. High Church writers usually labour hard to prove that his conception was essentially realistic;[4] but the scientific theologians and Church historians are nearly all against them. No doubt

[1] Writers like Dr. Moberly and Bishop Gore are much given to depreciating the *Didaché*. Dr. Moberly calls it "a Jewish manual veneered with Christianity" (see *Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 172 f.); while Bishop Gore describes it as the work of "a half-Christianised Jew" who "had no grasp at all of the sacramental principle" (see *Church and Ministry*, p. 413 f.; *Body of Christ*, pp. 43, 97). But it seems hardly legitimate to set aside the testimony of one of the earliest documents of the sub-apostolic age on the ground that the author has an inadequate appreciation of High Church theories. No doubt the Eucharistic language of the *Didaché* is defective when judged even by the standard of New Testament teaching, for no reference is made to the death of Christ. But to disparage the work on the ground that the writer has no grasp of "the sacramental principle" is to beg the very question at issue. Contrast the judgment passed by a historical student like Prof. Swete on the Eucharistic forms of this Early Church manual: "Whatever may be the history of the *Didaché*, the words in themselves embody a thoroughly Christian, though too exclusively mystical, a view, and might well have proceeded from some disciple of the school of St. John" (*op. cit.*, p. 168). Cf. also Dr. Sanday, *Expositor*, Third Series, v. 13 ff.

[2] IX. 3.

[3] X. 3.

[4] See Kahnis, *Die Lehre vom Abendmahle*, p. 177 ff.; Gore, *Body of Christ*, p. 292 f.

certain expressions can be pointed to which appear favourable to such an interpretation of his thought;[1] but, on the other hand, the way in which he speaks of faith as Christ's flesh and love as His blood,[2] and describes the gospel itself as the flesh of Christ,[3] shows how far he is from any doctrine of the real objective presence of the Lord under the species of the Supper, and justifies the statement that for Ignatius the concept "flesh of Christ" is itself a spiritual one.[4]

When we come with Justin to the middle of the second century, a more realistic conception evidently presents itself. Justin sees an identity of the consecrated bread with the body of the incarnation, and believes that through participation in the Eucharist our flesh and blood are so nourished as to undergo a mysterious transformation.[5] Here, therefore, we have passed quite beyond the sphere of New Testament ideas, and have begun to enter into that region of magic and mysteriosophy by which, from Justin's time onward, the New Testament doctrine was gradually revolutionised.[6] It is true that the process of transmutation was by no means uniform in all parts of the Church. Indeed, here if anywhere the claim that the ancient Catholic Church presents us with a constant and universal tradition is seen to be absurd. For while Irenæus takes up the doctrine of Justin and carries it still further in physical directions,[7] the Alexandrian writers cling to a more spiritual interpretation, and Origen, in particular, distinguishes the spiritual view which sees a drinking of Christ's blood in the reception of His words of life, as the view of more instructed Christians, from the material-

[1] See especially *Ad Smyrn.*, vii. 1. [2] *Trall.*, viii. [3] *Philad.*, v.

[4] Harnack, *History of Dogma*, i. 211, 212. Cf. Loofs, *Realencyklopädie*, i. 39 f.; Swete, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

[5] *Apol.*, i. 66. [6] Harnack, *ibid.*

[7] He argues, *e.g.*, from the reception of the Eucharist to the resurrection of the body (IV., xviii. 5).

istic conceptions of the vulgar.[1] Tertullian, again, while exceedingly realistic in some of his expressions, speaks at other times of the bread as being no more than a figure of Christ's body.[2] No doubt it is true, as Harnack and others have reminded us, that "what we nowadays understand by 'symbol' is a thing which is not that which it represents; at that time 'symbol' denoted a thing which, in some kind of way, really is what it signifies."[3] This strange mode of thinking had been rendered familiar by the mystery-cults of the time, in which "a symbol was a mystery, and a mystery was not conceivable without a symbol." None the less, as Harnack goes on to remark, the really heavenly element was not regarded as identical with the visible form. This indeed is self-evident, for in so far as one subject is conceived of as a figure or symbol of another, the two cannot be identified, however close and subtle and mysterious the relations between them may be thought to be.

It is not till we reach Cyprian that we find realism unqualified by any figurative interpretations. Certainly Cyprian puts forth no such theory as transubstantiation or consubstantiation. But for him, without any explanatory theory, the Eucharistic elements are the very body and blood of Christ. "Cyprian," to quote Harnack once more, "was the first to designate the *passio Domini*,—nay, the *sanguis Christi* and the *Dominica hostia*, as the object of the Eucharistic offering."[4] And yet, it must be observed, Cyprian could do no less, inasmuch as he held that in the Eucharist the sacrifice of Calvary is repeated by the action of the ministering priest. His priest-idea and his sacrifice-idea necessarily drew with them a thoroughly realistic

[1] *Hom. in Num.*, xvi. 9; cf. *Con. Celsum*, viii. 32. See Loofs, *op. cit.*, p. 49 f.; and *Leitfaden*, p. 137.

[2] *Adv. Marc.*, iii. 19, iv. 40.

[3] Harnack, *op. cit.*, ii. 144; Loofs, *Realencyklopädie*, i. 44.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 136.

conception of Christ's presence in the elements. In the words of a thorough-going and consistent modern High Churchman, "If the Body and Blood of Christ are not really present on the altar, the Victim of Calvary cannot be present on the altar; and if the Victim is not present, the sacrificial character of the service is changed."[1]

Cyprian's speculative formulations leave us far short of that later ritual development by which the Lord's Supper was gradually changed into the Roman sacrifice of the Mass and the Dread Mystery of the Oriental Church. But it is unnecessary to trace the process of transformation beyond the point to which Cyprian carries it. Already we see how far the Churchly practice and doctrine have travelled from the sphere of New Testament conceptions. And Cyprian provides the type of the views regarding the ministry and the sacraments which gradually, and in spite of such protests as that which is embodied in the Montanist reaction, dominated the ancient Catholic Church. The light that falls from Cyprian's writings, so far from directly illuminating the pages of the New Testament, only serves to reveal the immense gulf which separates the Churchly Eucharist in the middle of the third century from the Supper of Jesus in the upper room, and the "breaking of bread" in the communities of apostolic Christianity.

What explanation can be given, we naturally ask, of this great transformation? The historical explanation is not far to seek; and the reality and completeness of the transformation are rendered all the more apparent when it is thus historically explained.

(1) One part of the explanation has been already referred to. The Lord's Supper was originally associated with an ordinary meal, and the elements of the rite were portions of the food and drink that lay upon the board.

[1] Mr. Leighton Pullan, *History of the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 98.

There was no altar, but only an ordinary supper table around which the participants were gathered; there was no priest, but only the presiding head of the household, or one of the office-bearers of the community. So long as this intimate connection with the common meal was maintained, the simplicity and purity of the sacrament was so far safeguarded. But when, from various causes, the Eucharist was separated from the Agapé, the way was opened for the intrusion of influences which were entirely foreign to the homely rite which was ordained by Jesus, and practised by the Church of the early Christian days.

(2) Such influences were not long in making their appearance. And, first, there was an influence from the heathen world—the mighty influence of the whole spirit of heathen worship, and especially of the associations and ideas that gathered round the rites and ceremonies of the pagan Mysteries. It was from the Gentile world that the vast majority of converts were drawn into the Church; and they came, it must be remembered, with many of their old superstitious notions still deeply rooted in their minds. There is a Chinese aphorism which says, "A man is more like the age in which he lives than he is like his own father and mother." And there were multitudes of Christian men and women who had been truly born again of the Spirit of God, but who, nevertheless, carried with them into the midst of the Christian community conceptions of religious worship which formed part of the very atmosphere of the heathen society in which they lived. Nothing could be more strongly contrasted than the Christian view of religion as a vocation of faith, and the pagan view of it as essentially and first of all an outward action. But baptism and the Lord's Supper, as being outward symbols, formed "crystallisation-points," as they have been called,[1] for heathen notions to seize

[1] Anrich, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

and work upon; and more and more the tendency grew to an assimilation of Christian worship to the Mystery-worship of the Gentile world. Not that we are to think, at all events in the first instance, of any deliberate or even conscious adaptation. On the contrary, the Christian communities cherished a fierce antipathy for the Mystery-organisations as such. An amusing illustration of this is furnished by Justin's complaint that, under the influence of the evil demons, there was an aping in the Mysteries of the usages of the Christian Church.[1] For it is historically certain that the worshippers of Mithras and Zagreus did not derive their Mystery-practices from the example of the Christian cultus, either through the operation of demons or in any other way. But while Justin's remark may be held to preclude the idea that the converse had taken place after any conscious fashion, it reminds us, at least, that already, by the middle of the second century, a certain analogy existed between Christianity and the Mysteries, an analogy which was perceived and commented upon by Justin himself. The growth of this analogy is one which can be clearly traced in the history of the Christian cultus. We see it in the multiplication of ceremonies, in the adoption of the Mystery-terminology, in the transference of the idea of the worth of the sacrament from its religious content to its material elements and forms; until at length we have passed quite away from the glad Eucharist of the first disciples and have come to the *φοβερὸν μυστήριον* of the later ecclesiastical conceptions.[2]

(3) Alongside of this influence from the sphere of contemporary heathenism, there was another influence from the world of Old Testament Judaism. The pressure of this influence was due especially to two causes. First, to a

[1] *Apol.*, i. 66. Cf. Tertullian, *De Præscriptione Hereticorum*, 40.

[2] See Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, p. 292 ff.; Anrich, *op. cit.*, *passim*; Holtzmann, "Die Katechese der alten Kirche," in *Theologische Abhandlungen*, p. 66 ff.

desire to find support for priestly, hierarchic, and ceremonial tendencies that were growing up within the Church; and next, to an uncritical and unhistorical use of the Old Testament, which made it very easy to gratify this desire. Even before the close of the first century we find Clement of Rome supporting the idea of a Christian hierarchy by an appeal to the threefold ministry in the Old Testament of high priest, priest, and Levite.[1] And by and by the sacrifices of the temple were pleaded on behalf of the sacrifices of the Christian "altar," the gorgeous vestments and smoking censers of the Jewish ritual were treated as inspired reasons why the ministering priesthood of the Christian Church should have robes and incense to correspond, and the power and authority of the priesthood over the souls of men was enforced by the quotation of such a text from the Old Testament as this: "And the man that doeth presumptuously, in not hearkening unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, or unto the judge, shall die" (Deut. xvii. 12).[2] And this inversion of the teaching of religious history was rendered possible by the fact that the Church of those days had no proper conception of the true nature of the Old Testament as the record of a progressive revelation, and so used the very system which Christianity had come to abolish as a plea for superseding the teaching of Jesus and His apostles. The things which Christ had done away with were brought back again by a circular path, and the religion that had begun its work in the world with the claim that it came to reveal the worship of God in spirit and in truth, went back once more to the "beggarly elements" of the old order of patterns and shadows.

It is easy, no doubt, from the point of view of ecclesias-

[1] Cf. Mr. Inge, *Contentio Veritatis*, p. 292; Mr. C. Anderson Scott, *Evangelical Doctrine Bible Truth*, p. 200.

[2] So Cyprian repeatedly. See Principal Lindsay, *The Church and the Ministry*, p. 265.

tical opportunism, to elaborate an apology for all this on the plea of historical necessity; to affirm, for example, that unless Christianity had clothed itself in heathen and Jewish garments it would never have converted the ancient world. But what is difficult to understand is how this retrogression from the spiritual platform of Jesus and of Paul to pagan materialism and Jewish ceremonialism can be defended, as it sometimes is, on the ground of the true principles of religious evolution; and how it can be supposed that the teaching of the great prophets of Israel, and the culmination of their teaching in the revelation of Jesus Christ, is carried to a yet higher stage of spiritual development when the Christianity of Jesus Christ has been exchanged for the Christianity of Cyprian of Carthage.[1]

As, then, we find no positive contribution to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper in the writings of St. John, or in any of the later New Testament books, so we discover in the subsequent non-canonical literature a positive development, indeed, but one that is gained only by forsaking the ground of the original Christian teaching and practice. Hence, if the New Testament is to be our final authority as to the

[1] Cf., *e.g.*, Mr. Inge in *Contentio Veritatis*, p. 286 ff.; and Dr. Illingworth in *Divine Immanence*, p. 141 ff. The latter defends the weaving around baptism and the Lord's Supper of a "sacramental network" drawn from Jewish and Græco-Roman sources by saying: "Had Christianity been merely a spiritual religion—supposing such a thing possible—and subsequently adopted sacraments, this might conceivably have been called a decline. But the religion of the Incarnation could not possibly be merely spiritual. It not only started with sacraments from its very origin, but it was essentially and fundamentally sacramental to the core. For what is the Incarnation itself but a sacrament, the sum and substance of all sacraments?" This strikes us as little better than elaborate quibbling. For the point with which the writer is concerned is not the bearings of the Incarnation upon the philosophy of the Christian religion, nor yet a distinction in the abstract between a purely spiritual and a sacramental religion; but the question whether the Church should derive its sacramental doctrine and practice from Jesus and His apostles, or from the theologians of the Old Catholic Church. And if it was "inevitable," as Dr. Illingworth tells us, "in accordance with all the laws of historic evolution," that the sacraments of Christ should undergo so complete a transformation, has this not a somewhat disastrous effect upon his own belief in the reality of the Incarnation itself, and in the normative worth of the revelation of God in Christ?

mind of Christ regarding this sacrament of His own appointing, we must seek our doctrine of the Supper in the narratives of the original institution, and in the interpretations of it which are furnished by St. Paul. As we do so, the immense importance and value of the sacred rite for the religious and social well-being of Christ's people and community becomes very apparent. At the same time, its value is seen to lie not in any mysterious qualities inherent in the bread and wine, but in the power of the whole ordinance, not merely as an outward symbol of Christ's great sacrifice, but as a definite historical embodiment of His own word of institution and promise, to bring us through faith into immediate contact with Christ Himself, ever present in grace at His Table. And thus, as we eat and drink in remembrance of His love and in the hope of His kingdom, we enter at the same time into a personal and vital communion with Him who is the very life of our souls, and who, with each returning Holy Supper, offers Himself anew to those who hunger and thirst to receive Him.

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